

Frederick II., King of Prussia. 1330. e. 4.

N. J. Rogers

CHARACTERISTIC
ANECDOTES,
AND
Miscellaneous Authentic Papers,
TENDING TO
ILLUSTRATE THE CHARACTER
OF
FREDERICK II.
LATE KING OF PRUSSIA.

WITH
EXPLANATORY NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS,
BY B. H. LATROBE.

Ex pede leonem.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, OPPOSITE
BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY,

MDCCLXXXVIII.

PREFACE

THE following sheets were chiefly translated and compiled from a German work, now published in numbers at Berlin, under the patronage of the present king. The first, which is to deal in every subject of the Prussian dominions, that a work which professes to collect and record every interesting saying and action of that great prince, could not fail of being well received, whatever might be the merit or demerit of the performance. A fair judgment of its worth can therefore hardly be formed from the rapidity of its sale, and to render it acceptable to a reader interested only by curiosity, it was requisite to give it an entire new dress, and to



P R E F A C E.

THE following sheets were chiefly translated and compiled from a German work, now publishing in numbers at Berlin, under the authority of the present king. The memory of Frederic the Second, is so dear to every subject of the Prussian dominions, that a work which professes to collect and record every interesting saying and action of that great prince, could not fail of being well received, whatever might be the merit or demerit of the performance. A fair judgment of its worth can therefore hardly be formed from the rapidity of its sale; and to render it acceptable to a reader interested only by curiosity, it was requisite to give it an entire new dress, and to

make a selection which a cool judgment, and not merely an enthusiastic admiration, might approve.

How far the present selection may deserve this approbation, the public have to decide. From living for some time upon the spot where every action, and almost every word of the late king had its effect, and where every individual was personally interested in his conduct, the compiler may probably be very unfit to judge of what can be either entertaining or instructive to those of his countrymen, who have not been in that situation. He however hopes, that his miscellany may contain some matter tending to throw a nearer light upon the character of a prince, who has by some, been called the cruel tyrant, and by others, the father of his people.

In a country, where neither the constitution, nor the wise and amiable character of the monarch, admits of the smallest idea of tyranny, every despotic act of a foreign unlimited prince, though authorized by the established laws of his dominions, may appear to be dictated by
arbitrary

P R E F A C E.

arbitrary or tyrannical motives. The sense of the natural rights of individuals, biases the mind too strongly, to suffer it for a moment to conceive an infringement of them, by the single will of one man, to be legal. But an exertion of power, which in this island would be looked upon as a most flagrant instance of oppression, might perhaps in Prussia, deserve the softer name of a beneficent exertion of royal authority in a case of necessity.

The critical circumstances, in which Frederic II. from the beginning to the end of his reign was almost constantly engaged, made it necessary for him to act with an uniform, and inflexible degree of steadiness, to enforce the execution of his plans by the most vigorous means, and to prevent to the utmost of his power any measure from miscarrying, which might break the chain of successful events, upon which the main object of his ambition depended; and this seems to have been, to see himself the uncontrouled and unmo-
lested monarch of a flourishing, powerful, and wealthy state. No part of his reign

therefore, was inactive or dull. The most tranquil times of peace, teemed with new projects, for the accomplishment of what he thought the welfare of his dominions; and however rigorous his measures might at first seem, and however individuals might suffer by their execution, if he was persuaded that they in the end would tend to the promotion of the general good of the state, no consideration could possibly shake his resolution.

When the unlimited power of a monarch, directed by wisdom, justice, and humanity, is uniformly exerted to this great end, it perhaps constitutes that form of government, under which men who have learned to sacrifice their private feelings as individuals, to what their reason convinces them it is right to suffer as citizens of a great state, may enjoy more political happiness, than under any other mode of government whatsoever: they may then imagine themselves members of a large family, directed by a wise and kind patriarch, whose authority, they are certain, will never be exerted but to promote their happiness,

happiness, mildly to correct their failings, or generously to reward their merits. But the minds of most men are so perverse, that they will not be compelled to do what is evidently for their own advantage; they are as jealous of the liberty of injuring themselves at their own pleasure,* as of

* A particular friend of mine travelled alone across the country near Leipzig, in Saxony, a part of Germany where the peasantry are less dependant upon the nobility, than in many other parts. As he was unacquainted with the country, he took along with him a peasant from one of the villages as a guide. The man seemed to have a good share of plain common sense, and the gentleman entered into conversation with him upon various subjects, and among others asked him, how it happened that in the neighbourhood of so rich a town as Leipzig, and in so fruitful a country, the villages had so very poor and mean an appearance? "Why, Sir," replied the peasant, "I can tell you exactly how this happens. We are here our own masters, and that is our misfortune. When our young folks get a little down upon their chins, they begin to think themselves men, and forsooth they must needs marry, before they know how to manage a farm, or to look after their business; and the girl understands nothing of house-keeping neither; has presently a parcel of children, and every thing goes at sixes and sevens, and so they are soon ruined; and can never

of their most valuable rights; and to controul their caprice, is to wound them in one of the most tender parts. Wherever therefore we see power, we may naturally expect to hear complaints, and from these we ought by no means, without strict examination to conclude, that such power has been improperly exercised.

The various constitutions of the different and scattered countries, which form the Prussian dominions, or rather the

lift up their heads afterwards." "That is certainly a great misfortune," replied the gentleman. "Now I am acquainted with some villages in Upper Lusatia, where matters are managed in a different manner, and it seems it would be well for you, if you were under the same regulations. The peasants there, are the property of their lord, and he takes care that they are not ruined by any such inconsiderate marriages. When a young fellow is fit to be married, and understands his business well, his lord looks out for some clever wench for him, or perhaps leaves him to his choice, if a proper one; they are married, all things go on well, and the peasants get rich and comfortable." "Lord in heaven defend us from any such tyranny," cried the peasant, "are we not to have our own choice in a wife? That we will, Sir, and though we are all ruined by it."

practice

practice and power of former princes, had placed in the hands of the monarch a very unlimited authority. The nobles indeed had, or ought to have had, in many parts of his dominions, some controul over the royal prerogative. But we do not find, excepting in a few instances of a local and trivial nature, that the orders of the late king ever met with opposition from this large and powerful body, the only bulwark against the torrent of despotism, whose numbers, had they been united in any common plan, might have enabled them, not only to have defended their own rights, but to have extended them, by breaking in upon the authority of the king. But neither the employment given them by constant wars, the want of pecuniary resources, nor fear, operated so powerfully to ensure their obedience, as the opinion they had of the wisdom and patriotism of their monarch; so that if ever in a northern climate, and over an enlightened nation, a king exercised an unbounded and undisputed sway, it was Frederic the Second.

Whoever

Whoever is conversant with German writers, will find much said about *German liberty*, and with a degree of enthusiasm, which, one should imagine, nothing but its benign effects could inspire.—But whoever travels into Germany with English ideas of this jewel, who does not expect to find liberty in its pure and natural state, but hopes to see it as modified and curbed by the regulations of civilized society; may perhaps in most parts, be totally disappointed. In some of the many sovereignties of the large tract of country, which goes by the common name of Germany, he will think the expression means (if it means any thing) the *liberty* of the prince to do with his subjects what he pleases; to sell them as soldiers to a foreign power,* or to heap taxes upon

* This is not an ideal evil. In a certain district of Germany, one might imagine one's self in a country inhabited by amazons. The villages are crowded with women; they till the fields, and do almost every work commonly supposed to be the province of men. Before the peace of Paris, the evil was still greater than at present.

them

them, almost above their abilities to bear, in order to support an inelegant extravagance. In other states, he will perhaps imagine, that it signifies, a degree of *liberty* enjoyed by the nobles, and exercised upon a lower order of beings, called citizens and peasants; a kind of liberty less injurious to the state than the former, as a mild exercise of it is necessary to the support of those, in whose hands it is lodged. In a few free Imperial cities, he will indeed find individuals enjoy a degree of consequence and freedom, which has raised Hamburg, Lübeck, Frankfurt on the Main, Augsburg, and Nürnberg, to a state of opulence which neither the situation of the towns, nor the number of their inhabitants would otherwise have entitled them to. But in most of the rest, factious magistrates, or powerful neighbours, will be found to have gone a great way towards rendering their liberty merely nominal; and only in a few villages in Thuringia, and some other parts of the country, he may meet with an inconsiderable class of people, called

called free peasants of the empire (*freie Reichsbauern*) who are tributary to no lord, and whom their small number, and their impotence, protects from the notice, or the rapacity of the neighbouring princes.

In asserting the unlimited power exercised by the Prussian monarch, I was naturally obliged to answer an objection, which might have arisen from the frequent use of the word *German liberty*, the true meaning of which is, I believe, often mistaken by the writers of that country.

GERMAN LIBERTY, is a term merely relating to the inherent and unalienable rights and privileges of the constituent members or states of the empire, in opposition to the power and prerogative of the emperor. Every state of the empire from the poorest count, to the most powerful elector, is united in this one common interest, and the diet at Regensburg (*Ratisbon*) composed of the deputies of all the states, may be looked upon as the guardian of their rights.

The supreme Aulic council at Wetzlar, ought to be equally attentive to their preservation,

servation, but as the authority of its members depends upon, and dies with the reigning emperor, its decisions cannot be supposed to be entirely free from bias to the other side, and the character in which it is most conspicuous, is that of the supreme court of appeal from every other authority in the empire.

It was a wise stroke of policy in Frederic II. to give new vigour and support to this liberty, by instituting the so called *Fæderal Convention*; by which he united the greatest number of the states, under the common obligation of supporting the independence of each other. He thereby accomplished two important ends; he secured a permanent opposition to the ambition of emperors, and by providing an effectual bar against the encroachment of single states upon one another, he prevented any one of them from increasing their power to a formidable degree.

The only circumstance favourable to private liberty in this unwieldy system, will appear to be the right of the meanest individual, to arraign his lord in the supreme

preme Aulic council. Perhaps, in no instance, has theory and practice been found so widely to differ as in this. The regulations of this court, render the suits carried on in it necessarily more dilatory, more expensive, and more vexatious, than can be possibly conceived, even by a man ever so much disgusted by a tedious litigation in any of our courts. If this is the case when the parties are of equal influence and rank, it may easily be imagined, with what success justice may contend with superior power.

But without entering into any speculative reasoning upon the subject, a short stay in the country will convince any man of common observation, that in every part of Germany, the happiness of the subject depends upon the disposition of the prince.

When Frederic II. mounted the throne, his dominions were no better cultivated, and perhaps more thinly inhabited, than any other part of Germany. Soon after his accession he conquered Silesia, a country then labouring under every species of oppression that an ill managed government could

could inflict, and notwithstanding its innumerable natural advantages, poor, depopulated and waste.

At his death, he left his German and Prussian dominions the most flourishing, the best cultivated and inhabited of any other part of Germany, and Silesia, in its present state, presents to the traveller an appearance of wealth, of cultivation, and of populousness unequalled in any country east of the Maese; so that taking all his dominions together, the number of their inhabitants is not computed too high, if it is said to have increased by one half, since he ascended the throne.

If TYRANNY can produce these effects, the meaning of that word is in general strangely misconceived. That they were produced by violent exertions of arbitrary power is certain, and that individuals often felt themselves hurt, and oppressed, is no less so. Every interest that stood in the way of the general good, was forcibly removed, and the dearest rights of private persons were frequently trampled upon, to pave the road for some regulation, generally beneficent.

There

There were three classes of people upon whom the inconveniences of these regulations lay uncommonly heavy, and who therefore would be more inclined to brand him with the name of a tyrant, than any other. These were travellers, dealers in foreign commodities, and monied men, who chiefly consumed them.

To defray the great expences necessary to the carrying on of long and destructive wars, to the maintaining an immense standing army in times of peace, to the settling of new colonies, to the assisting of distressed subjects, and to the providing for an expensive civil establishment; the most rigid œconomy, and the most effectual and productive schemes of finance were necessary. It was an established maxim with Frederic H. to burthen with as few imposts as possible the necessaries of life *, and to lay the heaviest load upon

* In Hamborough a contrary policy prevails. Necessaries of life are taxed highly, because a rich people can afford to pay for them. Articles of commerce pass free, because the town is to subsist and to grow rich by trade!!

its

its luxuries. The produce therefore of the taxes upon land and houses was comparatively small, and the chief revenue arose from the duties of customs and excise. In an open country, accessible in every part of its frontier, these duties might be easily evaded; and a door was every where open to smuggling, which without the most rigid and watchful attention, could not be prevented. This made it necessary to keep up an army of excise officers, known in that country by the detested name of the *Regie*, who overrun the country like a swarm of locusts, and harrassed the traveller intolerably *. As it was supposed that the natives, who were connected with one another by many endearing ties, might be too indulgent in executing the revenue laws, the directors of the *regie* took into their pay a set of French vagabonds, who having no interest to keep up their national character of po-

* This inconvenience must be suffered in every part of Germany; but in the Prussian dominions it was under the late reign a most horrid nuisance.

liteness, commonly used their petty authority with the utmost degree of insolence and severity. At entering or leaving any town above the rank of a village, these pestiferous animals fell upon the traveller, and either detained him by a tedious and vexatious search of his baggage, by which a great part of it might easily be spoiled, or obliged him to pay for a free passage by a bribe, the frequent repetition of which in a long journey, might amount to a considerable sum. The king, who was well known to direct every spring of government, and to enquire into the execution of every one of his orders himself, had to bear all the curses occasioned by the inconveniences arising from this regulation; though in fact, he was as little to blame for the insolence of his officers, as the king of England, on account of the ill-conduct of any English officers of revenue.

Merchants were not a little incommoded by the regie, but a more important inconvenience to them were the excessive duties upon foreign goods, almost

6 amounting

amounting to a prohibition. When Frederic II. mounted the throne, the manufactures of the country supplied hardly any thing but the most necessary articles of life, and even these in a very imperfect degree. Most of the gratifications of ease and luxury were imported from abroad. But notwithstanding the flourishing situation to which he during his reign raised almost every manufacture, there were still many articles, which either nature had denied the country, or the manufactory of which was still in its infancy.

In the system of German commerce, the great fairs held in different parts of the country at stated times, form a very capital feature. Francfort on the Maine, Leipzig, and some other towns, may be looked upon, during their fairs, as the general exchanges of the whole country. Commercial people of every denomination flock thither, every bargain of any importance is made there, every account settled, and every dividend paid. By means of its fair, Leipzig, an inland town, without any manufactures of their own, without a navigable river, and even without

good roads to make it easy of access, has risen to a very great degree of consequence and opulence, and the advantages accruing from it are diffused throughout Saxony.

At Frankfurt on the Oder, and at Breslau in Silesia, are similar fairs, which were formerly resorted to by the merchants of all the neighbouring countries, who there supplied themselves with every article of inland and foreign produce which they wanted. But by the heavy imposts upon every foreign manufacture, the fairs at these places dwindled away into markets for hardly any thing but the produce of the country, and furnished foreign commodities merely to the natives, at an enormous price; and instead of their being the entrepôts from which all the neighbouring countries were supplied with foreign goods, the stream of commerce found other channels, and enriched other towns.

This could not but be severely felt, both by foreign merchants, and by the monied men. The former might certainly charge the duties upon their goods, though they

they by that means diminished the number of their customers, but the latter had no redress; they were obliged to pay dear for what they enjoyed, and at the same time it was a constant source of vexation to them, being continually embroiled with the vermin of the regie.

Had it been possible, or had the king been inclined to find out a means by which his dominions might not be drained of specie, and yet commerce not cramped by duties which almost prevented every intercourse with foreigners, it might perhaps have been better for his states. But the principle of the measure was so well-grounded, that it did not much stint the growth of that prosperity which marks almost every spot under Prussian government.

The idea that the government of Frederick the Second was tyrannical, is so prevalent, even among some classes of the subjects of his dominions, that I may hope to be pardoned for having dwelt so long upon that subject. The miscellany now before the reader, will enable him to form

form some judgment of his personal character.

I cannot help noticing a mistake which seems to have crept into almost every English work, in which the late king of Prussia is mentioned. He seems to be universally called in this country, *FREDERIC the Third*. Whoever reads the Prussian history will find, that the grandfather of the late king was *FREDERIC the First*; his father *FREDERIC WILLIAM the First*. Then followed *FREDERIC the Second*; and the present king, the nephew of the former, is *FREDERIC WILLIAM the Second*. All the state papers of the late king stile him, either simply *FREDERIC*, or *FREDERIC the Second*.

The public is at present so much in the habit of bearing with persons afflicted with the biographical cacoëthes, and especially with publishers of anecdotes and confidential letters, that I may perhaps hope for an extension of the like indulgence to me. If the contents of the following sheets operate as a soporific, I shall flatter myself that it is partly because

cause the indignation of the reader is not roused, at seeing the fair character of a worthy man torn to pieces by an uncandid, a silly, or a stupid friend of the deceased. Humble authenticity is all the merit I could wish to claim; to have informed or entertained a man of sense, all the reward I ought to covet.

London, June 6,
1788.

B. H. L.

SKETCH

and I wish to cover
an estimated amount of \$100,000
to be withdrawn; to have sufficient
funds available is all the more
likely, as a large fund of the
money and not to be an accident.
The first action of the order is not
to be taken.

SECRET

S K E T C H

OF THE CHARACTER OF

F R E D E R I C II.*

“**F**REDERIC the Second was rather under the common size. In his younger years his figure and deportment were elegant and graceful. His countenance was full of fire and expression, his eyes were large, blue, and extremely lively. But many years before he died, age and fatigues had bent his body forward, and his head leaned towards his right side.

* Those parts of the character of Frederic II. enclosed in inverted commas (“—”) are extracted from the first pages of the first volume of the German Anecdotes. As these were compiled by a Gentleman of very respectable authority, I have in the text given his opinion, though differing from my own.

B

But

But as long as he lived, his features retained so strongly marked a character, that most of his numerous portraits are something like him ; but there are few that well express the fire and energy of soul that enlivened every feature of his face,* upon which the various affections and passions which actuated his mind, were very strongly depicted."

"His voice in conversation was exceedingly melodious,† and when he com-

* Among the best prints that have been published of the king of Prussia, those of Chodowiecki have the undoubted preference ; and of all Chodowiecki's, the print representing him on horseback at the head of several of his generals, (among whom the portraits of his present Majesty, of general Ramin, and general Ziethen, are uncommon likenesses) reviewing a regiment, drawn up in the back ground. This print has been copied and published in England, by which the likeness has lost something, but it still retains a very striking resemblance.

† I must beg leave herein to differ from my author. To me he seemed to speak very fast, very indistinctly, and so much through the nose, that much attention was necessary to understand him ; and in this opinion I am confirmed by a Silesian nobleman who has frequently conversed with him.

manded

manded his army, he could be heard in the field at a great distance very distinctly. He spoke much, and with great fluency. The succession of his ideas was rapid, and he was never at a loss for proper and well adapted expressions."

"He possessed in an uncommon degree the talent of quick repartee; and his answers to his friends were always pertinent, witty, or contained a well turned compliment.* He is well known not to have been very partial to the fair sex; but in the company of ladies, who in his opinion possessed talents and good sense, he was lively, polite, and entertaining." There were a few ladies who possessed his friendship in a high degree, especially Madame de Camas, who was about ten years older than himself. His letters to this lady, which have been published in French, are

* Nothing could put the king more out of humour, than when a question he asked met with an embarrassed silence, especially if it was put to an officer. But if he received for answer, "I don't know," he lost all temper, and would rather put up with something pert, or irrelevant.

written with an uncommon warmth of affection and respect.

“In the beginning of his reign, his dress was remarkably neat and elegant, and on court days, and occasions of particular ceremony, rich and splendid. But after the second Silesian war, he became more negligent in this respect. He then in general wore a plain blue uniform; and on particular court days, an uniform of blue velvet embroidered with silver.*”

“His hair was always carelessly dressed, and unequally powdered. This operation he performed himself as soon as he rose from his bed.† His whole dress was compleated in ten minutes without any assistance.”

* The last time I saw him, at a review, he wore a plain blue coat, quite threadbare, the front covered with Spanish snuff. His hat was very greasy, had lost one corner by a bullet, and had two holes in one side.

† It is a fact of less importance than authenticity, that in the last years of his life *he wore a wig*. Likewise that he often laid himself into his bed in his boots and hat, without even pulling off his coat.

His

“His constitution was by no means naturally strong, but by a regular diet and much exercise, he brought himself to bear the greatest fatigues without much detriment to his health.”

“Frederic’s private company was always select, and consisted of men of wit and learning. In this circle of friends he wished entirely to unbend his mind, and putting off the monarch to introduce a perfect equality, and freedom of conversation. None understood the art of keeping up a lively and interesting conversation better than himself; and he even allowed others (contrary to the maxim in general established among princes) the privilege of being witty, as well as himself.”

He may be said to have had favourites; but if this term is confined to such persons as possess the friendship of their prince in a degree that influences the actions of their government, Frederic had none. He had, what few monarchs can boast, intimate friends. But of all the persons whom he admitted to any degree of intimacy, General Count Rothenburg

had the honour of possessing his fullest confidence, and warmest affection ; and as long as the General lived, they seemed to be inseparable.*

All the scenes of human misery and distress to which Frederic the Second had been witness in the course of a life of continual war and bloodshed, had not rendered his heart callous and unfeeling. His annual tour through his dominions, was looked for by the injured and oppressed among his subjects as the period of their relief ; and wherever he found misery, he seldom stopped to enquire whether it were occasioned by guilt, but he hastened to avenge and relieve it.

The astonishing exploits of Frederic the Second, prove him the greatest general of his time. Throughout the course of his wars, he owed less to lucky circumstances and to fortunate conjunctures, and more to his own skill and bravery, than perhaps any general in history, who has

* This will evidently appear from the great grief he felt at the death of his friend, of which mention will be made in the course of the volume.

gained

gained an equal number of victories. With an army raised in his own small dominions, he fought at once and conquered Swedes, Russians, Poles, Saxons, Austrians, the army of the Empire, and the French, with no ally but the English, who from the nature of circumstances, could afford him little or no assistance in his own dominions, where he had to bear the fiercest attack. To an uncommon skill in manœuvre, he joined personal bravery,* undaunted by any danger; but his courage was cool and deliberate. In the midst of the noise and tumult of battle, he was calm, he directed every attack, he always kept sight of his main plan, and observed every advantageous circumstance.

“The indefatigable attention of the king of Prussia to business, the unremitting ar-

* It is commonly said, that in the first battle in which Frederic II. commanded, he was so overpowered by fear, that he quitted the field, and fairly ran away. One of his generals is said to have rode after him with the news of victory; upon which he returned, joined in the pursuit, and never afterwards betrayed the least signs of cowardice. But I could never find any authentic account of this anecdote.

§ ANECDOTES OF THE LATE

dour with which he pursued the plans he had formed, and the uniformly continued exertion of his powers, during a reign of forty-six years, is one of the most striking features in his character. During this long period, neither pleasure nor fatigue, neither success nor disappointment, could induce him for a single day to remit his attention to the great objects he had in view."

The history of mankind teaches, that ambition has been a chief ingredient in the character of every warrior. But we commonly find, that a course of carnage and victory, has ended in the total ruin and devastation of the countries conquered, in the misery of thousands of their inhabitants, or in the slavery of the native country of the hero. The ambition of Frederic was more exerted in defending the subjects he had already, and making them happy, than in increasing his dominions; and he was, with equal glory, the champion and the father of his country.

Frederic

“Frederic united qualities seldom found in the same mind. His fiery genius, to which nothing seemed too difficult to accomplish, or too great to comprehend, could descend to the most minute details, and submit to the confinement and close application of the man of business. There are many who wish mankind to believe, that their want of memory in trifles, proceeds from the sublimity of their powers in affairs of consequence. But the king of Prussia possessed a memory capable of retaining the most trifling occurrences equally with events of consequence. He knew soldiers at first sight, who had served in his regiment forty years before, when prince of Prussia.* At his reviews, he frequently astonished his officers by remembering and enquiring after private soldiers he had taken notice of many years before.” Had he once formed an opinion of the character of any one, unless it was favourable, he never promoted him, though

* Instances of his extraordinary memory will occur in the following anecdotes.

the

the application were made at ever so great a distance of time.

“ It was natural for a man of the king’s activity and indefatigable diligence, to expect the same exertions from every one he employed, and those who executed his commands with alacrity and fidelity, found in him a kind and indulgent master. At the same time he generally formed a right judgment of what he might reasonably expect from the abilities of his servants, and he was never obstinate * or inconsistent in his commands.”

The

* To say that the king of Prussia was *never obstinate* in his commands, (as my author is of opinion) would be placing him above the rank of human beings. It is improbable that the best of kings should always remember that though his will were absolute, his judgment might be mistaken. A degree of obstinacy was, perhaps, rather inherent in the character of Frederic the second. The business of Arnold the miller, of which an account will be given in the course of this miscellany, is a dreadful proof that he could be obstinate as well as mistaken. I shall beg leave to insert, perhaps out of their place, two anecdotes, of the first of which I was an eye witness; the other I had frequently heard in Silesia; but deliver it now upon the authority

The encouragement Frederic gave to arts and sciences was not only liberal, but splendid.

authority of a gentleman well acquainted with the circumstance.

The fortress of Silberberg, situated upon the ridge of mountains which separate Silesia from Bohemia, was always a favourite of the king, and he resolved to render this naturally strong place impregnable. I have been told by skilful engineers in the Prussian service, that its situation is such as to render it of little or no use, as the pass it is intended to command, is too near the works, and too low to be much molested by its guns. However, the monarch persisted in his resolution, and expended immense sums and labour upon the place. About the year 1781, the governor, M. von Haas, a skilful engineer, was ordered to cut a moat of about ten fathom wide and proportionably deep, round a fort, erected upon a solid rock with a view to bring a battery to bear upon the pass. He ordered this work to be completed by the time of his annual reviews in 1782. It was represented that it was impossible, but he thought otherwise. I happened to be at Silberberg when the king arrived, and was close to his carriage. As soon as he alighted, the governor presented himself to his Majesty, and a conversation ensued, which was almost verbally the following:—
 KING. *Haas, have you finished your work, are all the fortifications complete?* HAAS. Indeed, Sire, they could not be finished. KING. *So! Is the moat completed.* HAAS. Your Majesty will see that it was impossible.

splendid. Men of learning, and artists of merit, did not merely live upon his smiles and

impossible. KING. *Arrest him immediately.*—(A subaltern stood a few yards off; the king asked who he was. His name was mentioned, and he called him.) *Take off his sword and give it me.* The governor's sword was then given to the king, who threw it into the carriage, and mounted his horse immediately. The governor remained in arrest (I think) two months, but being an officer of merit, he was suffered to keep his post; but an inspector-general was appointed, who had the supreme direction under the king of all Silesian fortresses. I was afterwards informed by an officer of rank, that it was the opinion of the inspector-general, that the work could not have been completed in the time allowed.

I will only add, that Silberberg has this use, that with Glatz and Schweidnitz it helps to form a line of strong holds from the Bohemian side, which would harraßs an army entering from that quarter exceedingly.

The export of salt from Silesia to Poland had been always very considerable, and the revenue arising from it was of some importance. It was the custom of the Polish merchants to find their own casks, which were gauged by the Prussian salt-officers, and they were then at liberty to ram down as much salt into them as they possibly could. The king, who enquired into the minutæ of every thing, thought proper to make an alteration in this mode of proceeding, and ordered the persons employed in the salt-works to measure the salt

and approbation, but his treasury gave them more substantial support. Merit, wherever he found it, was not suffered to struggle with poverty, or to pine in obscurity; and though the many demands upon his finances did not suffer him to give to all abundantly, he took care that no man of genius should *want*.

It is not difficult to account for the great preference he gave to the French language and literature, above that of his own country. At the time, in which he chiefly applied to the acquirement of literary knowledge,

salt to the Poles, and make them pay the price and the duty accordingly. This the merchants thought a hardship, and the greatest part of them left the market, and bought their salt elsewhere. As the Poles had been the chief exporters of this article, the salt revenue felt the loss very severely. A statement was therefore made out, in which clearly appeared the difference between the former and the present receipts. It was presented to the king, he read it, threw it over his shoulder, and said "*Es mag bleiben.*" It shall remain as it is.

These are two strong instances from a great number, in which the king, in spite of argument or remonstrances, persisted in his first measures.

(which

(which was before his father's death, and in the first years of his reign) the German language lay totally neglected, and it was thought a mark of great barbarism in an author to write any work of literary consequence in his mother tongue. Latin seemed the only language fit to convey German ideas. German poetry was still in its infancy; its language was rough, uncultivated, and loaded with innumerable foolish and unnatural conceits. Godsched was the first who attempted a reform; and though his poems were very little superior to those of his predecessors, he may be looked upon as having laid the foundation of the present improvement of German poetry. French was then the language of the court, and the young king naturally acquired a taste for the works of the elegant French writers of that, and the former periods; which was by time established into a rooted prejudice, and almost an aversion to German literature. Some few years before his death, he wrote a small book upon the subject,

subject,* which proves that he was totally unacquainted with the more modern poets and other authors of Germany, and had read little or nothing of their works for the space of forty years. He decides therefore peremptorily; and like a monarch, declares the whole German language to be barbarous, and suited to the unpolished strains of their bards; and all the remonstrances of his friend and minister Hertzberg, could not induce him to soften his decision.

But, notwithstanding his personal partiality for French literature, he encouraged Germans who possessed skill or learning, by giving them appointments and pensions, though he did not read or admire their works.

* In this work he informs us, that the poetry of Shakespeare is, to use his own words, "abominable jargon." Perhaps he had this information from Voltaire.—After the publication of this work, he altered his opinion a little in favour of the German language, upon reading a translation of Tully's *Officia*, by professor Garve.

Musie,

Musick*, painting and architecture, found in him a munificent patron, and in these arts his countrymen enjoyed an equal share of his approbation with foreigners. The streets of Berlin and Potsdam, and the magnificent palaces he erected, will remain indelible proofs of his good taste in design and architecture; and the collection of paintings at Potsdam and Sans-Souci, show the knowledge he had of the excellent and beautiful in this art, as they are all of his own choice, in which he was not guided by the name of the painter, but by the merit of the picture.

The great partiality of Frederic II. for dogs, has been frequently the subject of ridicule. His great attention to these faithful and innocent companions of mankind, may perhaps be attributed to the goodness of his heart, and even a weakness arising from that source is amiable.

* Of the king of Prussia's musical abilities and taste, Dr. Burney has given us an account in his travels through Germany; to which elegant and entertaining work, I refer the curiosity of the reader, as it is impossible to say any thing more judicious or authentic upon the subject.

He

He had several of these animals of whom he was particularly fond, and in all his rooms were a number of small leather balls, with which he used to play with them. One of them, called *Bicbe*, was his particular favorite, had been his companion in many of his campaigns, and at her death he erected a small monument to her memory in his gardens at Potsdam.

The character of this great prince is best illustrated by the events of his history. This cannot be said of all or of many princes. The fame and honours of a Justinian or a Louis XIV. more properly belong to the great statesmen and generals they had the good fortune to have in their service. But Frederic reigned himself; The praise due to every meritorious action, or the disgrace incurred by any misconduct or injustice, belongs, not to his ministers, but to himself.

The last words of this monarch
when he was peacefully dead, and in
all his rooms were a number of small
leather balls, with which he used to play
with them. One of them, which he used
was his particular favorite, had been his
companion in many of his campaigns, and
at his death he ordered a small monument
to be erected in his garden at Potsdam.
The character of this great prince is
well illustrated by the story of his history.
This cannot be told of all of his
princes. The two and a half of a
million of souls XIV. and a half
belong to the great Russian and German
king. The king of Prussia is in the
last of his life, and in the
service of the Prussian king.
The Prussian king is very much
of the king of Prussia, and is very much
or in his life, and is very much
or in his life, and is very much
but to himself.

REMARKABLE
DECREES, ORDERS, OFFICIAL LETTERS, &c.

OF
F R E D E R I C III.

HIS Majesty, the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, &c. &c. has already frequently desired, that all official papers, questions, and memorials of his Supreme Board of Finances, War, and Domains*, may not be drawn up in so prolix and verbose a manner as hitherto, but be made as concise and perspicuous as possible. But as this order has not yet been complied with, and as the questions

* General — Ober — Finanz — Krieger — und Domainen — Directorium.

which are daily sent in, are loaded with many obscure and unnecessary details and narratives, by the perusal of which his Majesty's time is wasted; his Majesty hereby commands his Supreme Board, &c. that the Secretaries employed in expediting the said official papers, be directed to draw them up in a manner conformable to the orders and intention of his Majesty, and that the Members of the Board themselves see to it. Otherwise his Majesty may be induced * *to extract with his own hand, one of these verbose memorials, which may be sent in, and draw it up as it ought to be, in order to shew the Board the possibility of being clear, and at the same time concise.*

Potsdam,
Sept. 26, 1740.

FREDERIC.

To the Supreme Board, &c. &c.

* As most of the orders of Frederic the Second contain paragraphs strongly marked as his own words, both by the peculiarity and energy of the stile, I have endeavoured to render them as nearly like the original as possible, and they are throughout printed in Italics.

My

* My dear Ministers of State, Messrs. von COCCEJI, von BROICH, and von ARNIM.

IT cannot but be still recent in your memories, that I have already made and published many orders and regulations, in order to prevent the ruinous delay of law-suits. But as I still perceive that these orders and regulations, so far from having produced any good consequences, have been neglected, *and that very little strict justice is still to be met with in my dominions*, but that my subjects have the greatest reason to complain of the delay thereof; I herewith most graciously command you, to make this business, in which my subjects are so

* All orders of the King, to his first Ministers, or officers of rank, are addressed to them in these words, "My dear, my very dear, or my dearly beloved N.N." And they commonly end with the words, "I am your affectionate, or gracious King, &c." And as he employed none but such as he looked upon to be his particular friends, in places of honour and trust, he uses a very familiar style in his orders to them.

deeply interested, your first aim, to consider this the most important duty of your office, and to provide, that in all my Courts of Judicature, such fixed and unalterable rules be established, that every suit, according to the circumstances attending it, may be forwarded and dispatched without delay, and, according to rigid justice, finished and decided within a year from its commencement. I herein depend entirely upon you. After mature deliberation, you will contrive such methods as are most likely to answer this end *.

I am, &c. &c.

Berlin,
Jan. 14, 1745.

FREDERIC.

* In consequence of this order of his Majesty, we find by a subsequent letter to Cocceji, dated Jan. 3, 1750, that the Supreme Court of Appeals went through and determined, in one year, five hundred and sixty suits, so that not one suit from the former year, remained on the list.

My

My dear High Chancellor, M. von JARRIGES.

IN answer to your report, dated 23d Instant, and to the postscript annexed, I acquaint you that, notwithstanding the many reasons you alledge, why the suit of the citizens of Francfort, whose houses were destroyed by fire, has been delayed these three years, and is not yet decided; I am still of opinion that nothing can excuse or palliate a delay, by which those poor people, who have lost all means of subsistence, and who are still less able to re-establish themselves in their former dwellings, are compleatly reduced to want and beggary. This is not the only case in which I know that justice has been delayed; I have heard of several more: you will therefore do well to be particularly attentive to the dispatch of depending suits, to examine into the conduct of the different courts, and to *make examples of those judges, by whose negligence justice is delayed.*

I am, &c. &c.

Potsdam,
Sept. 24, 1767.

FREDERIC.

C 4

My

My dear Minister of State, M. von MUNCH-
HAUSEN,

I can by no means pretend to give an immediate decision in regard to the succession of Baroness von Rakewitz (formerly Countess Flemming) to the estates of her grandfather. *It would be a despotic exertion of power, which you know I detest.* The will of her grandfather must decide in this business, and I only desire by these presents, that the Baroness von Rakewitz may have the decision upon her appeal expedited with that dispatch and impartiality, which ought to characterize the administration of justice in my dominions. In this I depend upon your well-known justice and unimpeached integrity.

I am, &c. &c.

Potsdam,
July 4, 1780.

FREDERIC.

The

The following Royal Mandate was sent to M. Neuburg, Librarian to his Majesty at Berlin, when the king was engaged in writing his well-known Memoirs of Brandenburg.

HIS Majesty the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, hereby commands, that his librarian at Berlin, Counsellor Neuburg, do search his Majesty's library for the best antient chronicles, or historical writers of the province of *Cburmark* *, as far back at least as the reign of Frederic the First, and do send the same for some time to his Majesty, without delay. But it is hereby ordered, *that no collection of fables, or absurd chronicles be sent*, but only such as contain the most authentic records of the state of the *Cburmark* in those times. Counsellor Neuburg is therefore to comply with this order, with all possible dispatch and attention.

Potsdam,
April 8, 1747.

FREDERIC.

* The electorate of Brandenburg is divided into three provinces, Churmark, Ukkermark, Mittelmark.

WHEREAS

WHEREAS his Majesty, our most gracious Sovereign, has been informed, that in several places innocent people have been wantonly murdered by malicious persons, who have pretended that they were weary of life, and as most of them superstitiously believe, that by the attendance of the clergy before their execution, they may be brought to repentance and peace of conscience; his Majesty is hereby graciously pleased to command, that whenever in future such wanton murder shall be committed, the delinquent shall not be permitted on any account, either during confinement, or at his execution, to see or converse with any clergyman whatsoever, let his religion be what it will, but he shall be executed without any such indulgence. Our supreme court of auditors * is

* *General-Auditoriat*, the Supreme Court of Justice and Equity for the Prussian army. As the constitution of the Prussian army differs very materially from that of our military, it may, perhaps, not be unentertaining to the greatest part of my readers, if I here insert a short sketch of this admirable system.

Perhaps

is therefore commanded to act accordingly in all such cases, and likewise to communicate such our resolution to all inspectors general of regiments, in order that it may be

Perhaps in no country in Europe the military enjoys a greater share of honour and privileges than in the Prussian dominions. Although the low wages of the common soldiers, and their great number, oblige them to submit frequently to the meanest offices in the towns where they are in garrison, they enjoy certain rights from which their fellow citizens are excluded. A soldier, for instance, may carry on business in any town or city in defiance to the immunities of any corporation. One witness renders his will valid, whereas more are required to that of a citizen; and the court in which every offence committed by a soldier, is tried, has an air of liberty unknown in civil courts. In every regiment, a certain officer is established, called an Auditor, who wears an uniform, distinct from that of other officers, and who must be a lawyer by profession. His business is to enquire into, and take depositions upon every case of law, arising in his regiment, to take cognizance of all complaints, both of a *civil and military* nature, brought against soldiers, and to make his report to the court martial. This court is chosen from the regiment, upon every particular case, by rotation, and consists of two privates, two serjeants and one from every rank of commissioned officers. The members of this court are sworn in the same manner as our juries. In all cases, except those of life and death, their

be made known to the regiments under these inspectors, and it shall be inserted into, and read with the usual articles of war.

*Potsdam,
April 17, 1765.*

FREDERIC.

My dear Minister of State M. von HORST,

IN the annexed papers, you will see the report made in compliance with my commands, by my minister of state M. von Munchhausen, respecting the fine of 5776

their opinion is decisive (unless the party appeal to the King); but in capital cases, it is always referred to the General Auditoriate at Berlin. This latter court, which is permanent during his Majesty's pleasure, consists of a certain number of lawyers, most of whom have been Auditors of regiments, and their decisions are always laid before the King for his confirmation. From both these courts, as well as from every other, an appeal lies to the King, whose will is law.

Inspectors-General are officers of high rank, appointed to take care that the particular division of the army under their inspection, be well exercised, regularly paid, and provided with cloathing.

dollars,

dollars, to the payment of which, the court of excise in Breslau have condemned Weidner, a merchant since found to be insolvent, on account of a fraud by him committed in the excise duties. *In this case I think it just, that a corporal punishment be substituted in the place of a fine, which does not affect the individual upon whom it ought to be levied; and as otherwise the intention of the punishment would be baffled, and the creditors of such persons, whose affairs are in a bad way, be the sufferers.* You are therefore hereby commanded to communicate my pleasure to the Court of Excise at Breslau, that the actual sum lost by the fraud of Weidner be levied upon his effects; but that instead of the fine, by the levying of which his creditors would suffer, a corporal punishment be inflicted upon him, adequate to the amount of the fine. You are therefore to act accordingly, and to see that the necessary steps are taken towards the dispatch of this business.

I am, &c. &c.

Potsdam,
Nov. 5, 1767.

FREDERIC.

My

My dear Major-general Baron von KELLER,

I understand that a musketeer in your regiment, one Sutorius, is condemned to six years labour upon the fortifications, for having attempted to destroy himself, which sentence I think much too rigid. Few men in their sound senses will ever attempt to take away their own lives. Perhaps the fellow is melancholy, and endeavoured to get rid of existence in a fit of this disorder. Upon this ground I do not confirm the sentence pronounced upon him by the court martial, but direct, *that instead of being sent to labour upon my fortifications, he be blooded, and every proper step be taken towards his cure; and that when this is accomplished, he be again taken into my service, admonished and encouraged to behave in future in a more proper and rational manner.*

I am, &c. &c.

Potsdam,
June 14, 1781.

FREDERIC.

I

HIS

HIS Majesty the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, &c. &c. having frequently observed, that the farmers general of his domains, are more protected by his *provincial courts** than they in justice ought to be†, and that the complaints of his subjects against their cruel and oppressive treatment are frequently disregarded, so that they seldom find redress, let their cause be ever so just; by which means his Majesty's subjects are entirely abandoned to the arbitrary will and pleasure of the said farmers general: and his Majesty being further of opinion, that

* *Kammer*, is a Court established in every province of the Prussian dominions, consisting of two departments, one for the collection and application of the revenue, the other for the administration of justice. Each Court has a President, a Bench of Assessors (*Departements Rätke*) and a number of referendarii, who are young lawyers, that attend the Court with a view to their improvement in the knowledge of the laws and customs of their country, and to future promotion.

† Before the reign of Frederic II. the peasants were nearly in the same state of slavery in which the serfs were in England before the reign of King John.

the

the source of this evil lies chiefly in the selfishness of the assessors of these courts, whose interest prompts them to connive at, and sometimes to encourage and protect the oppression of the farmers general in instances where they may be well convinced, that the complaints of the peasants are well founded: his Majesty therefore most graciously herewith commands his Supreme Board of Domains, to examine strictly into this business, and to take measures by which the provincial courts, and especially the assessors of these courts, may be effectually compelled, to decide in all suits between the farmers general and their subjects, impartially, with a rigid regard to justice, and without the least respect to persons; and in general to attend more to the protection of the latter, than has hitherto been done.

Potsdam,
Nov. 22, 1743.

FREDERIC.

To the Supreme Board of Domains.

WHERE.

WHEREAS his Majesty, &c. &c. has been informed, that several of the farmers general of his Domains have so far maltreated the peasants under their jurisdiction*, as even to have struck them, and *as his Majesty is determined not to countenance any such tyranny*, it is his royal will and pleasure, that whenever in future it shall be proved, that a farmer general has struck any subject whatever, the same

* The farmers of the Royal Domains were, or thought themselves entitled to the same authority over the peasants belonging to the estates farmed by them, which the nobles exercised over their subjects. The power of the nobles, even within this century, extended, in many places, to the life and death of the peasant; but it had been reduced and confined within narrower bounds, especially in the Prussian dominions. However, at present every noble is the chief justice of his own estates (*Gerichts herr*) and has the power of imprisoning, or otherwise punishing his subjects for petty offences.

The farmers, being more immediately under the royal controul, abuses of power in them were more likely to be complained of, and redressed; and as the king was well known to be more inclined to favour the subjects, than to add strength to the authority of the nobles and farmers general, the frequent and often frivolous complaints of the former, rendered the duty of the farmers extremely irksome.

D

shall

shall, without mercy, be immediately sent prisoner to one of the fortified towns, though he were ever so punctual in his payments, or even paid his rents in advance. The provincial Court of Churmarck, is therefore directed to communicate this his Majesty's pleasure to the farmers general under its jurisdiction; and if in future the case should occur, that any farmer general strike a subject, the Provincial Court is directed to take the part of the latter against the former.

Berlin,
July 15, 1749.

FREDERIC.

To the Provincial Court of Churmarck,

FREDERIC the Second, King of PRUSSIA,
&c. &c. To our, &c. &c.

WE have frequently taken notice that persons, who have served in the capacities of lacqueys, valets or footmen, have contrived to get into public offices, and to procure themselves places in our Courts of Law and Revenue; and that by this means, persons of bad characters, who have neither good manners, nor liberal sentiments to recommend them, have filled places of
trust

trust and consequence; and that they, in order to support their extravagant way of living, have pursued measures by which our service has been materially injured.

His Majesty therefore being resolved that no such abuses shall in future be suffered, and being determined that his Courts of Law and Revenue shall be filled with fit persons, who have had a proper education, whose sentiments and conduct are those of men of honour and credit, and who have been, as it were, educated and trained from their youth to the places they are employed in; hereby graciously commands you to see to it, that in future, *no valet, lacquey, or footman, be introduced into any public office whatsoever*; but that the vacancies be filled by men, who are not only men of abilities, but likewise of good education and polite manners; and, if possible, men who have from their youth been trained to the places they are intended to fill.

At the same time we hereby declare, that if Counsellors of the Board of War, or Domains, &c. &c. have sons, who are endowed with good natural abilities, and

possess talents, which in time may qualify them to fill the posts occupied by their fathers; if they have had a good and proper education, and have made use of it to their improvement in official knowledge; if moreover they have particularly applied to the business in which their fathers are employed, or have been for a few years clerks in the offices of any of our Ministers: it is our gracious will, that such persons shall be proposed to fill up such vacant posts, in preference to any other men whatsoever.

In the same manner we command you, to give the same preference to the sons of Secretaries, Registers and Clerks of public offices, provided their fathers have given them a good education, have instructed them in the business of their particular office, and provided their conduct is irreproachable, and their abilities adequate to their places.

But, at the same time, it is by no means our will, that these places become hereditary, and without exception descend from father to son, to the total exclusion of other persons

persons of abilities: but we mean this; that if, for instance, a Counsellor of the Board of War, at Berlin, has educated and instructed one of his sons, in the manner aforesaid, and his son has at the same time qualified himself by his own application to such an office, the same shall have the preference, in case of a vacancy in the Prussian or any other provincial Court, to any other person.

By this means we are in hopes not only to provide a nursery of able men, who have been trained from their youth in the business they are employed in, but likewise to encourage our servants to give their sons a good and useful education, to instill into them sentiments of honour, and to instruct them carefully in the knowledge necessary to their posts, (provided they possess natural abilities) *as they may be certain of our royal favour, in providing for such of their sons, in preference to any other persons; without apprehension, that men of another description will be put into the places they may think themselves intitled to.*

Every one whom this concerns, is commanded to pay the strictest obedience to these our orders, and to see to it, that every Member of our Courts act accordingly; for which purpose you are to communicate these our most gracious commands to all officers under your controul, in as far as it is necessary for them to know the same, &c. &c.

Berlin,
Dec. 26, 1747.

FREDERIC.

To the Presidents of all our Provincial Courts.

A Gentleman supposed he had discovered a deficiency in a certain fund at Stettin, and communicated his suspicions to the King, apparently without any selfish views. An enquiry was accordingly set on foot, but no deficiency found. An application was made in consequence, to his Majesty, requesting that he would punish the Informer, to which he returned the following resolution:

FREDERIC,

FREDERIC, King of PRUSSIA, &c.

YOUR application to me dated 26th of last month, requesting that the person who gave me the information concerning the supposed deficiency in your fund may be punished by a year's imprisonment, is, in my opinion, extremely unjust, and I cannot agree to it on any account. *I am as poor as Job; I have been cheated by Görne*; I am belied and deceived by many others, and must at the same time support a great number of my subjects; all this has robbed me of great sums of money, and if any one discovers or warns me against these cheats, I should be very unjust were I to requite his friendship in so ungrateful a manner.* In the mean time, as I am not willing to give you any cause of complaint, I shall punish him, by ordering him into arrest for a fortnight, which is sufficient.

Potsdam, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

* Görne was a Minister of Finance, who embezzled immense sums.

My dear Minister of State, Baron von
ZEDLIZ.

I HAVE great objections in my own mind, to sign the sentence of death, pronounced by the Court, against the incendiary Döpel. Both he and his accomplice Weifs are said to be still very young; and on that account it is my pleasure, that neither of them be executed, but that they be confined in the house of correction, and care be taken, that during their confinement, they be better instructed in their duty to society, and made sensible of the dreadful nature of their crime. You are therefore directed to have the warrant altered accordingly.

I am, &c. &c.

*Potsdam,
April 23, 1776.*

FREDERIC.

Field-

Field-Marshal Count von S — — — N,
requested his Majesty to promote his son
in a military line; the following answer
was sent him:

Noble, and well-beloved,

I HAVE considered the request of your
letter, dated May 22, a. c. and I must ac-
quaint you, that I have a considerable time
ago given orders, that no Count shall ever
be admitted to any considerable rank in my
army: for commonly when they have
served me a year or two, they leave the army
and return home. If your son wishes to
enter into my service, he must entirely
forget that he is a Count; and if he does
not improve in his profession, he can never
be advanced.

I am, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

The

The following was added in the King's own hand writing :

“ Young Counts, if they learn nothing,
 “ are ignorant fellows* in every country.
 “ The son of the King of England is now
 “ a midshipman on board a man of war, in
 “ order to acquire a knowledge of the ma-
 “ nœuvres of that service. If a Count
 “ means to be of the least use to the world
 “ or to his country, he must renounce all
 “ pride arising from birth or titles †, (for
 “ these things are baubles) and he must de-
 “ pend for fame and praise upon his own
 “ personal merit.

FREDERIC.”

* Germ. Ignoranten.

† Germ. das sind nur Poffen.

The young Gentleman here alluded to, though the son of one of the greatest General's of his time, was by no means famous for bright parts.

A Lady

A Lady, who was considerably in debt, presented a complaint to his Majesty, in which she thought it very unjust, that her creditors should demand interest upon the sums due to them, for the time allowed her to settle their accounts *. In answer to her memorial, she received the following royal resolution :

DEAR MADAM,

THE situation of your circumstances, represented to me in your complaint, dated 23d instant, excites my pity, but I can by no means protect you against your creditors in the manner you wish. The delay granted you, cannot excuse you from pay-

* *Indult, Germ.* is a delay granted by the German Courts to debtors, in order to give them time to settle their affairs, during which time, none of their creditors can arrest or distrain upon them. In some parts of Germany interest is allowed, but in most others, the debtor is exempted from paying it during this term, though the debts bore interest before the *Indult* was granted.

ing

ing the full interest upon your debts, especially as it is granted with the express condition, that full interest shall be regularly and accurately paid; *and it is impossible for me, or any of my courts, to release you from this obligation. In a suit of this kind, no rank, no high birth, no respect of persons, has the least weight with me; but in every other respect, I am your gracious King,*

Potsdam,
Oct. 27, 1772.

FREDERIC.

To Father FRANCIS PIZNER.

HIS Majesty the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, &c. &c. hereby acquaints Father Francis Pizner, in answer to his memorial lately received, that the decision of his business positively belongs to the vice-bishop of Breslau*, M. von Roth-

* Count von Schaffgotsch, is Bishop of Breslau, but has been obliged, on account of various *high crimes* and

Rothkirch, and he can by no means decide in any question of this nature; *for how should heretics be capable of judging in the disputes of a monastery of Franciscans, concerning the violation of their vows?* There is therefore no other way, but to refer the business to the vice-bishop of Breslau, to whom it has already been reported.

Potsdam,
Aug. 3, 1785.

FREDERIC.

To our well-beloved and worthy, &c. &c.

* DEAN REINBECK.

YOU are hereby directed to write again to Professor Wolf, and to try whether he

and misdemeanors, to quit the country. His residence is at Johannisberg in Bohemia, where he lives in all the splendor of a Prince, though his Silesian revenues are sequestred, and Baron von Rothkirch is appointed his deputy, with the title of *Weihbischaff*, or Bishop, for the sake of Ordination.

* Germ. *Probst*. a corruption, I presume, of the Latin word *Præpositus*, is a dignitary of the Reformed Church, under whose inspection all the Clergy of a province are placed.

will

will now resolve to enter into my service, in which I shall grant him every encouragement he can reasonably expect.

I am, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

Underneath the King wrote the following:

I desire you will spare no pains about Wolf. A man who loves and seeks truth, merits the respect of all mankind. If you can persuade Wolf to move hither, I shall consider you as having made a conquest in the province of truth.

FREDERIC.

To the SAME.

Worthy and well-beloved, &c. &c.

WHEREAS Major-general von Jeez has proposed the chaplain of his regiment, a Mr. Schaukirch, to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of the Dean of
Anclam,

Anclam, you are hereby directed to let me know, "*whether the above-mentioned person will do,*" and whether he possesses the qualifications necessary in this office; *as I am not disposed to make deans of bad men.*

I am yours,

FREDERIC.

HIS Majesty the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, &c. &c. being pleased to order, that whenever any of the common people have any petition or memorial to deliver to his Majesty, or upon any other occasion, they shall not, as hitherto, prostrate themselves upon the earth, (*which they ought not to do before any one but God, and which is a posture totally unnecessary, and unfit for the delivery of any thing* :) his Majesty most graciously commands his Supreme Consistory at Breslau, to direct, that this ordonnance be read from all the pulpits of the protestant churches in Upper Silesia; the same mandate having been likewise sent to the Vice-bishop von

Rothkirch, in regard to the members of the Catholic churches in his diocese, in order that the people may be therewith acquainted, and never in future prostrate themselves upon the like occasions. And the Supreme Consistory is therefore to direct matters accordingly.

Bettleren,
Aug. 30, 1783.

FREDERIC.

To the Supreme Consistory at Breslau.

WHEN the new Hymn book * was introduced in most of the churches of Berlin, the congregations of four parishes presented

* This new Hymn-book was compiled by a number of Gentlemen, whose religious principles were well known widely to differ from those called orthodox. It was ushered into the world by a Mr. Nicolai, a Bookseller, who, with very inferior abilities, possesses all the indefatigable activity of Priestley, in propagating his opinions, as far as in him lies. Great care had been taken to insert no Hymns in which the Godhead of Christ, the Redemption of Mankind, the Resurrection, the Trinity, or any other tenets peculiar to Christianity, were inculcated; and of course all the Hymns

sented a petition to the King, praying that they might be permitted to retain in use the Old Porsten Hymn-book. To this petition they received the following answer :

HIS Majesty the King of Prussia, our most gracious Sovereign, &c. &c. is too well convinced of the great value of a rational degree of toleration in matters of religion, to take the least notice of the request contained in the memorial, presented the 14th instant by four parishes of Berlin, much less to give any orders to the contrary.

His Majesty has, from a thorough conviction that he thereby fulfils the duty of a good Sovereign and father of his people, laid down as an unalterable principle of his government, that every subject shall

Hymns composed by the first Reformers, most of which have uncommon poetical merit, and possess among the common people of Germany a great degree of popularity, were omitted. The Hymn-book was much countenanced by his Majesty, who is well known to have been a strict disciple of Voltaire, and no friend to Revealed Religion, as appears by his *Apostolical Commentary upon Bluebeard*.

E

have

have liberty to believe whatever he can or will, and to serve God in whatever manner he likes, provided his principles or worship are not injurious to the peace of the state, nor subversive of morality. It is therefore his Majesty's will and pleasure, that no constraint whatever, in regard to the use or disuse of the new Catechism and Hymn-book, shall be laid upon any of the churches, but every one is in this respect, at liberty to think and to act as he pleases.

It seems probable that the new Hymn-book and Catechism, are more intelligible, more rational, and more suited to the service of God than the old, as they have been adopted by so many other congregations, the ministers of which are universally acknowledged to be men of eminent learning and piety.

The above-mentioned four parishes may therefore make themselves perfectly easy upon this point, as they and all their fellow subjects are compleatly at liberty to believe and to sing what they please.

Berlin,
Jan. 18, 1781.

FREDERIC.

The

The following was added in the King's own hand writing ;

*Every man in my dominions may believe what he pleases, if he is but an honest man. As to the hymn-book, every one is at liberty to sing " Now sleep the Woodlands all," * or any other foolish, stupid nonsense he chuses. But the Priests must never forget toleration, as I shall never suffer them to persecute any one.*

FREDERIC.

To our well-beloved Privy Counsellor of Finance, M. von TARRACH.

IN answer to your memorial, dated the 4th instant, respecting the establishment of a paper-mill upon the Dutch principle, by Eisenhard, I hereby acquaint you, that

* Germ. "*Nun ruhen alle Wälder*," the first line of an old Lutheran Hymn, written something in the Sternhold and Hopkins manner.

I think 30,000 dollars a sufficient advance towards the undertaking. I would have you consider how considerable a sum this is, supposing Eifenhard succeeds. Now citizens, instead of laying out their money in such undertakings, think only of buying estates, and expect me to take care of the improvement of their manufactures. *But this is properly the duty of citizens. Estates and manors are not all fit things for them.*

I am, &c. &c.

Potsdam,
July 6, 1780.

FREDERIC.

My dear Privy Counsellor of Finances,
M. von BRENKENHOF,

THE pains you have taken in endeavouring to make good the damages my territories have suffered by the late war, and the assistance you have to this end afforded my loyal subjects, have given me much pleasure. The report you lately
sent

sent in, likewise proves to me, that you have done every thing in your power to be as useful as possible. I am in hopes that my gracious intentions, forwarded by your assiduity, will soon accomplish the restoration of what has been ruined and destroyed by my enemies; but I particularly recommend to your attention, to give the first assistance to such as stand most in need of it, and to encourage those, who are not immediately in very pressing difficulties, to have patience, till it shall be in my power to assist them likewise; *for I most sincerely wish to approve myself to my subjects, the father of my country.* My Exchequer will not bear many very large disbursements at once. It is necessary to leave something for an emergency. Should my finances improve, the public welfare is certainly entitled to every thing I can spare; and I do not want inclination and ardent desire to assist my subjects. I hope soon to see you personally,

And am, &c.

Potsdam,
March 27, 1764.

FREDERIC.

AS the subject of the two following speeches may not easily be understood by an English reader, I shall beg leave so far to trespass upon his patience, as to give as short an account as possible, of one of the most beneficial regulations which characterize the reign of Frederic the Second. If something of the same kind could be introduced into this country, the South of France would probably, in a few years, be found a less attractive climate than that of our native isle.

In the long wars between Prussia and Austria, Silesia suffered more than any other part of the Prussian dominions. The nobility, who are the principal owners of landed property, were in general reduced to great poverty, by the total devastation of their estates, and by their long absence from home, during their service in the king's army. It was found, that to relieve those whose estates were in a ruinous condition, and to assist young noblemen who wished to establish themselves in the country, an immense capital would

would be required. The king, who had hitherto advanced money to his nobles, and who still wished to give them every assistance in his power, found his treasury exhausted by the expences of a long and ruinous war. A bank was therefore opened at Breslau, guarantee'd by the king and the united nobility of Silesia, and under the management of directors chosen by the whole body of the nobility, into which monied men were invited to deposit their money, and where the whole landed property of the province was their security. The credit of this provincial bank (as I shall term it, Germ. *Credit societæet, Landschafts Casse*) was soon so firmly established, that not only Silesians, but even foreigners were eager to place their cash where such good security was offered. This institution soon shewed its utility, by the amazing change of affairs it produced in a very short time. The regulations which produced this effect, are the following:

If a nobleman, whose estate is in a bad condition, or one who intends purchasing

a new estate, and cannot afford to pay the whole purchase money at once, wishes to borrow money from this fund, upon application to the directors of the bank, a commission is appointed to survey the estate in question.

By this commission the average income is valued, and the incumbrances upon it enquired into. By an ancient law of the country, no mortgage or debt contracted upon landed property, has any validity, unless registered in a court of law*; by which means the amount of the debt of an estate is easily ascertained.

As wood is the chief fuel of that country, the woodlands are very valuable, and form frequently the most productive part of an estate. It is therefore a principal object of the commissioners to preserve the woods. They are accordingly upon such valuation divided into one hundred

* The same regulation is established all over Ireland, and in two counties in England; with this difference, that with us all mortgages are valid; but those which have been registered must be paid in preference to any others, though of a prior date.

equal parts, and the proprietor of an estate is restricted from cutting down more than one of these portions annually, as it is generally supposed, that in the space of one hundred years, the timber which has been cut down will be re-sown*, grow up, and be again fit for the axe. The bank then advances any sum upon the estate, not exceeding one half of its valued worth, upon mortgage bonds. Of these I shall have occasion to speak hereafter†.

All sums deposited in this bank bear an interest of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. But money lent by the bank, pays an interest of 5 per cent. and the saving of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. defrays the expences attending the institution. No capital advanced by the bank is ever reclaimed, as long as the interest is regularly paid; and no one is ever refused

* The forests of Silesia consist chiefly of firs and different sorts of pines. These woods sow themselves, and are not fit for cutting within a century. In regard to birch, elms, alders, and other trees, which are not ever-greens, a shorter time is allowed. Oak is excepted, as requiring an equally long period.

† See the note, p. 69.

a loan,

a loan, provided his estate is found capable of paying the interest.

As the credit of the provincial bank depends entirely upon the good management of landed property, it naturally becomes the interest of every nobleman to keep a watchful eye upon his neighbours; and no estate can be materially injured without the knowledge of the directors.

Should a debtor of the provincial bank mismanage his estate, or suffer it to go to decay or ruin, so that it becomes worth less than the sum advanced upon it, the administration of his estate is immediately taken from him, put into the hands of two noblemen chosen by the assembly of the nobility of the province, and a steward is appointed to reside upon, and manage the estate. The proprietor is allowed an annual stipend, the surplus of his revenues is applied to the payment of his debts, and the estate endeavoured to be recovered by careful management. The accounts are laid half yearly before the usual assembly of the nobles, and as soon as the incumbrances are so far lowered as not

to exceed half the value of the estate, the owner is reinstated. The administrators receive nothing for their trouble, unless the consciousness of having been eminently useful may be supposed to be the best reward an honest man can receive.

As all the sons of a nobleman are of equal rank with their father, this institution is very useful to such of them, as wish to establish themselves in an estate of their own.

I have now only to beg the reader's pardon for this long digression, and to say, that in translating the two following speeches, I have endeavoured to retain, as much as possible, the manner of the original, which is more remarkable for nervous, than elegant expressions, and has more of the honest warmth of the warrior, than of the polished address of the senator.

The

The Speech of FREDERIC the Second, made to the deputies of the province of Churmark, assembled by his order at Potsdam, Jan. 18, 1776.

The deputies were, the dean of the cathedral of Arnim; the governor of the province, Baron von Werdek; the provincial counsellor von Luck; and the counsellor of war, M. Dietrich.

GENTLEMEN! Come in, come nearer! I speak to you, not as your king, but as your friend and adviser. You ought to be more closely united, to bring so useful a regulation to bear, as I have established in Silesia, where it answers my utmost expectations. My only view is the welfare of the state, and the preservation of my nobles, whose credit is at present very low.

I am certain that the estates of my nobles are considerably more valuable than they formerly were, or are now supposed to be, as their produce is so much risen in price.

price. This will easily be discovered by having them valued, in the same manner my domains have been valued. I would therefore advise you to have them all valued in this manner. But men of knowledge and experience must be chosen for this purpose; and I am willing to assist you with the abilities of the counsellors of my courts, who have experience in these affairs, and of whom I have a great number at command.

Money, I am certain, is not scarce in my dominions. By a statement which I have now by me, I spend in the province of Churmark * 1,800,000 dollars more than I receive from it, which money must remain in the province. It is therefore ridiculous to suppose that there is a great want of money. I know better.

A nobleman is by no means in bad circumstances, if he owes me one-fourth of the value of his estate. But if he is one-third of this amount in my debt, his case is considerably worse, as he must feel all

* In this province the royal residences are situated,
accidental

accidental damages very severely, such as bad crops, hail, fire, &c. I am however convinced, that the value of landed property is considerably risen above its former standard, when provisions and other necessaries of life were so much cheaper. But many noblemen are bad husbandmen, and do not make the most of their estates. Many are in my service, and know still less of their value; they have perhaps bad stewards, or farmers, and by these, and the intrigues of their attornies, they lose considerably. Now if every estate were appraised to the full amount of what it can produce, and then well managed, every body would be the better for it.

It is really dreadful to consider what unjustifiable advantages attornies take of the nobles who employ them. If they have procured them a loan, their employers have hardly enjoyed the benefit of it for half a year, when the capital is by their intrigues reclaimed, to give them an opportunity of earning something by a new negotiation; and many a one has paid in interest, attornies bills, and commission, eight *per cent.* for his money.

As

As I travel much in my dominions, I have become acquainted with a variety of circumstances, and likewise with the situation of Silesia. This induced me to order my minister of state, Carmer, to endeavour to remedy the above-mentioned evil by a general provincial bank, and it has answered my best expectations. The nobles in Silesia were at that time in debt to the amount of 10 millions of dollars, and in the short time elapsed since its establishment, they have paid off 600,000 dollars. This example, Gentlemen, you must imitate. It will certainly do; and I advise you by all means to unite upon this occasion, in order to accomplish so desirable an end.

*I, for my part, have no interest in the affair, but that of the state. The sovereign and the state are but one. Is the sovereign impoverished, the state must assist him; and are his nobles * in distress, the sovereign*

* Germ. die Stände. In a feudal government, the existence of the lower order of people depends upon the welfare of the nobles.

must

must help them out. No other interest, no other views actuate my conduct, but your prosperity. I therefore give it you as my advice, to strengthen your credit by a closer union with one another; and if you follow it, you will in future years find reason to thank me. The prosperity of Silesia is the surest proof of the utility of the regulation I propose.

It is but a poor objection to suppose that a whole province may be entirely ruined and laid waste, as happened in the famous war of THIRTY YEARS. It is not worth your consideration; for if the sky falls, we shall catch larks, and the day of judgment will make bankrupts of us all. And supposing a province to be entirely ruined, it is then the business of the sovereign to provide for its relief; for, as I said before, *he and his nobles are one*, and on this account I have no objection to be your guarantee. *With all my heart!*

I promise likewise never to meddle with your province, and to continue to pay you five *per cent.* for the money I have in hand.

hand*. I leave it to you either to lower the interest, or to continue it as at present. If you chuse that I return the capital, I can easily do it; but I think there are many monied men who will be glad to lend the province their money, which will be more advantageous for you. All this I leave to your discretion; and only advise you to follow the example of Silesia, where the institution flourishes, and where, as I have said before, they have already paid off 600,000 dollars.

You will be able to know the circumstances of your province at one view, if you first have all estates valued, in the same manner that my Domains are valued, by which means you will come at their exact worth, and know how they may be improved (which is, considering their present bad management, very practicable); and then examine accurately all registries

* By this passage it appears, that the king, probably to accommodate the rich nobles of Churmarck, had taken up money of them upon interest. As his treasury was always full, necessity could not have obliged him to it.

of mortgages, contracted either with, or without the consent of those in remainder, or reversion*.

As you are under the feudal constitution, as regulated in the year 1723, I would advise you to admit of all mortgages contracted without the consent of the reversioners to the present time, but in future only of such as have this consent, according to feudal law. If you at once agree to this, you will be at a greater certainty in regard to your future conduct; you will then, by an accurate valuation of the estates, and their annual produce, and by a strict enquiry into all existing mortgages, see the true state of the debit and credit of your province, and this is indispensably requisite to be done; otherwise time will be needlessly wasted, and nothing to the purpose performed. I will then willingly be your guarantee.

You will likewise, I presume, find by the registries, that the estates of some

* Germ. Agnates. According to the feudal law, no mortgage is valid without their concurrence.

noblemen are irretrievably mortgaged. Where this is the case, I will procure them the sum of 3 or 400,000 dollars, at 4 *per cent.* or less interest; and they may apply the difference of interest to the establishment of a perpetual sinking fund.

His Majesty then proposed to negotiate a capital to this amount among the nobles of Eastfriesland, but was of opinion, that it would be better to find out some other method, by which the interest might not be paid to foreigners. He then continued :

It will then become the duty and interest of the nobles, who in a body are guarantees of the institution, to see to it, that those who are in debt manage their estates well, and do not ruin the woods; that they keep their fields in good cultivation, and attend to their cattle, as is done in Silesia.

There is still another point of great importance to be considered. When a nobleman is incapable of paying his debts, and his estates are sequestred, and his income applied by a court of justice to the benefit of his creditors; they are commonly ruined by ill management; and when they are at last sold, they generally fetch several thousand dollars less than their real value; the owner gets nothing at all; and many creditors go likewise empty handed, and lose both capital and interest. This entirely ruins the credit of landed security, for which cause the nobles must be particularly watchful in cases of sequestration; they must take care that the estate is well farmed, carefully managed, and all creditors satisfied.

It is now your business, jointly to deliberate upon this subject; and if you wish for the assistance of the counsellors of my courts in valuing your estates, let me know it by letter. You are now in possession of my ideas. I shall not meddle with the constitution of your province, but leave it untouched; but to lower
the

the legal interest at present to 4 *per cent.* according to your request, is by no means expedient. When more money is offered for loan than is wanted; when mortgage-bonds * become current; when monied men are at a loss where to place their ready cash, then they will of course rather lend at 4 *per cent.* than see their money lie dead upon their hands. But violent measures are totally inapplicable †.

* The provincial banks advance money to the proprietors of estates upon mortgage-bonds for different sums, from 50 dollars to any larger amount. These bonds are negotiable like our bank notes, and answer the same purpose. But as they are not issued in any very considerable numbers, they are often difficult to be got, and therefore frequently bear a premium.

† The amazing knowledge of the King of Prussia in the abstruse speculations of money and interest, he had in a great measure acquired by his close study of Hume's political essays. This work he much admired, and always mentioned with warm approbation. This knowledge enabled him to render very essential services to the nations he governed; and it were to be wished, that those who are likely to have seats in either of the houses of our parliament, would not think the works of Montesquieu, Hume, and particularly of Mr. Adam Smith, beneath their attention.

By these means I wish to preserve my nobility from ruin, and especially those who are in narrow circumstances. Now, when you return home, lay these proposals before the rest of the nobility, and then make your own arrangements. I have merely given you my advice; you may do more or less according to your own judgments; and if you should hit upon any thing more to the purpose, I shall be glad of it.

But all the nobles must join as one man, and undertake the business with united powers. I will be your guarantee, and have no doubt but that the rich and opulent nobles will likewise be your guarantees; nor need they entertain the least scruple, as I am guarantee both for them and you.

I now dismiss the deputies; and you may, gentlemen, return home this very day, and then consider, with the rest of the nobles, the best means of bringing the business about.

Extract of his Majesty's Speech to the Deputies of Pomerania, held in the Year 1780, as given by the President von Schoening, who was present.

GENTLEMEN! come a little nearer! I mean to speak to you in the character of your best friend. You have applied to me for the establishment of a provincial bank. I am very willing to assist you, for I love the Pomeranians as my own brothers; it is impossible to have a sincerer affection for them than I have; they are brave men; they have both in peace and in war assisted me; in the defence of my country their lives and properties have been at my service; and should I omit this opportunity of testifying my gratitude, I should forfeit my claim to the title and the feelings of a man.

The Monarch spoke these words with a captivating warmth. His heart was so full of affection for

his country, and he, as well as we all were so moved, that he paused, in order, as it seemed, to indulge his feelings for a few moments. He then continued :

But first of all you must let me have an authentic certificate from the debt-book of your province, stating the amount of your debts. The neighbouring circles must be included, and also Luenberg and Buetow, which are in future reckoning to the province of Pomerania; and it is your advantage to extend the regulation to as many as possible. When this is done, I shall commission my two ministers, Carmer and Goerne, to make the necessary regulations for you. They have been employed in this business in Silesia and Churmarck, and are therefore well versed in it. Your deputies you must send to Berlin; and chuse men, who are not only masters of the subject, but who are intimately acquainted with the state
and

and circumstances of the province, and the neighbouring circles.

The great utility of the regulation is not immediately perceptible; but in two or three years time you will infallibly discover it, by the great advantages it will produce. I will likewise assist you as far as I possibly can. At present, I cannot advance many hundred thousand dollars*; the expences of a war are very great and uncertain; and besides this, the great damages done to my subjects by the floods, have drained my treasury considerably. But in Berlin alone there are about 1,200,000 dollars lying dead and unemployed, which will be heartily at your service, as soon as your credit is firmly established. This will be an advantage both to the monied men and to you.

The nobles of Silesia were entirely ruined by the war; but by this regulation they have recovered themselves again, and the same is the case in Churmarck,

* This speech was made just after the war occasioned by the disputed Bavarian succession.

I found at first great opposition, as many found themselves deprived of the liberty of living and spending their estates as they pleased: but no one who has ready money is in the least restrained, and he may squander it, and throw it away as he pleases. But in regard to landed estates, the nobles watch one another, and take care that none suffer their estates to go to decay, or to entire ruin. This is of very eminent use, as it preserves the nobility, which to me is a matter of the greatest importance, and upon which the very existence of my army depends *. All of the nobility certainly cannot serve in a military line; some must stay at home, and mind their families. *Others I must employ as ministers of state, and presidents of my courts; and in this last view I do not in the least care whether they are rich or poor, as merit alone determines my choice.*

It has often occurred, that a poor nobleman has acquired great riches in my

* Almost all the officers of the Prussian army are taken from the nobility, and no commissions are sold, as is the practice in our army.

service.

service. For instance: General Tauenzien, who was not worth any thing, and has now a fortune of at least 150,000 dollars. The late Field-Marshal Schwerin has often told me, that when his father sent him to Breslau to seek his fortune, he gave him *one* dollar, and at the same time a box on the ear, with these words, "*This bear from no one else.*"* And you all know how splendid a fortune he acquired in my service. Many have likewise become rich by a good and careful management of their estates, especially in Silesia; and in Pomerania, great advantages might be derived from the Silesian method, especially in the breeding of sheep and other cattle.

I am likewise very willing to appropriate, as long as I live, a fixed annual sum to the melioration of the province; and such gentlemen as have been promised sums of money in this view, and have not yet received them, shall not be disappointed. The death of M. von Bren-

* "*Dieses leide von keinem weiter.*"

kenhof, shall make no alteration in this respect. *It is of no consequence, whether at my death I leave a million or two more or less in my treasury, provided that during my life time, I spend them for the benefit and improvement of my country.*

His Majesty then seemed to make a motion to retire. We returned him our most humble and warmest thanks, which we wanted words to express, and requested that he would in future protect us. He then graciously dismissed us. The audience lasted above an hour.

The deputies were,
General Count von Bork,
Baron von Luckstedt of Hohenholz,
and the Provincial Counsellors von Winterfeld, and von Puttkammer.

My

My dear Minister of State, M. von DER-
SCHAU.

THERE is a surplus in the provincial bank of Churmarck, of 100,000 dollars, which has been offered me by the representatives of that province. As this sum has been entirely levied upon that province, I think it ought to be applied solely for the benefit of the same;* and in this view I have had the following idea, namely to lend this money, at the interest of four *per cent.* to the towns whose inhabitants live chiefly by agriculture, and to such noblemen whose estates cannot bear the expence, to enable them to adopt the English mode of

* The great discontents occasioned in Ireland some time ago, by a want of the benevolent policy of Frederic the Second in the men then in power, will be long remembered. A surplus in the Irish treasury (*mirabile dictu!*) of 3 or 400,000 pounds being discovered, it was brought over to England by a king's letter. For fear of similar disturbances in future, it has been found necessary, effectually to guard against any such dangerous surplus, by an ingenious contrivance, known by the name of the Pension List.

tillage;

tillage; and the interest of this money I would wish to be applied towards increasing the salaries of country schoolmasters, thereby to encourage them to pay more attention to the education of the youth under their care. I desire you therefore to give me your opinion upon this subject; and in case you differ from me in opinion, to make your own proposals for the accomplishment of my ideas upon the subject. This I expect you to do,

And am, &c.

*Potsdam,
June 9, 1771.*

FREDERIC.

His Majesty's wishes, in regard to the application of this money, were accomplished. The sum of 100,000 dollars was augmented to double the amount; and at the present moment, the schoolmasters enjoy the advantage of it.

A N E C -

A N E C D O T E S

OF

F R E D E R I C H.

L A T E

K I N G O F P R U S S I A.

IN the years 1730 and 1731, the late King of Prussia resided at Cüstrin, by order of his father Frederic William the First, and attended the sessions of the board of domains at that place. The president was ordered to treat him upon an equality with every other member of the board, and to insist upon the same attendance and duty from him which he expected from the rest. But as the president could not always forget that this young member of

his

his board might soon become his king, he frequently connived at him, when instead of listening to the deliberations of the board, he was employed in reading some French novel, or in drawing caricatures of his colleagues, placing one upon a tun, giving another horns, or a pack of cards, &c. &c. But notwithstanding this seeming inattention, he here laid the foundation of that knowledge in affairs of revenue and finance, from the application of which his dominions derived such great advantages.

FIELD-MARSHAL von Grumkow, carefully preserved a letter written to the father of the late king, which accompanied three reports from the board of war and domains in Newmark. Two of these the young prince had made out and written with his own hand, the third was only signed by him.

The king returned the letter, and had written in the margin :

“ Fritz

“ Fritz * must do more than merely
 “ sign his name, he must do the work
 “ himself.”

DURING the stay of the prince at Cüstrin, he conceived a very warm affection for the president of the provincial court, M. von Münchow. The day before he left this place of his exile, he had a long confidential conversation with him; and the president, among other things, asked him, how he intended, upon his accession to the throne, to treat those men, who by having been so maliciously busy in promoting the dissensions between him and his father, had been the cause of so much trouble to him? “ I intend,” said the prince, “ to heap fiery coals upon their heads.” This he did; for when

* *Fritz*, is a familiar abbreviation of *Frederic*. The late king was always called so by his father. Many of his soldiers, who had served him in most of his campaigns, took the liberty of calling him so likewise; and he had no objection to their honest familiarity.

G

he

he in the year 1740 mounted the throne, he made no distinction between the families of his greatest enemies, if he thought them worthy of preferment, and of those who had not meddled in the business.

WHILE the late king was in exile at Cüstrin, his affable disposition acquired him a great number of very warm friends, for whom he retained a particular affection. Among these were the president of the provincial court, M. von Münchow; lieutenant-general and governor M. von Lepel; counsellor of war M. Hanf, and Baron von Birkholz. Their friendship, shown him in this time of his disgrace, was amply rewarded by him. The son of Münchow he made minister of state, created him a count, and a knight of the order of the Black Eagle. Hanf died as counsellor of the supreme board of revenue, and M. von Birkholz was made president of the provincial court of Newmark. When M. von Schoening pro-
posed

posed this last gentleman to supply the place of M. von Rothenburg, whose infirmities obliged him to resign, the following conversation took place, which is an instance both of the good memory, and of the generosity of the king.—KING.

Did not this Birkholz marry a daughter of Münchow? SCHOENING. Yes, Sire, a

daughter of your minister of state. KING.

I know it; he has then a large fortune.

SCHOENING. No, Sire, he is in narrow circumstances. KING. *Then I suppose he*

has dissipated his fortune. SCHOENING.

This is not the reason, Sire; the Russians have ruined his estates. KING. *So! then*

he deserves, and shall have the presidency.

FREDERIC II. when prince of Prussia, was as passionately fond of the chase as his father. It was part of his duty, as a member of the board of domains at Cüstrin, to travel annually through the towns and country subject to the controul of his board. Upon these tours he made use of

an open carriage, in which he conveyed fire arms ready loaded; and whenever he happened to espy any game, he immediately converted a journey of business into a shooting party. Upon such an occasion he once chanced to drop a glove; and in attempting to take it up again, he touched the trigger of a gun in such a manner, that it went off, and discharged its contents close by his ear through his hat. Full of the idea how fatal this accident might have been to him, he leapt from the carriage, broke the gun to pieces against a tree, and swore a solemn oath, that he never in future would discharge a gun in the pursuit of this his favourite amusement. This vow he never broke; and had the German princes in general followed his example, the peasants would have less reason to complain of the destruction of their fields and fences, and of the ruin of their harvests.

The sentiments of the King of Prussia, in regard to hunting, appear strongly from the following paper, written with his own hand:

“ The

“The chace,” says he, “is one of the most sensual of pleasures, by which the powers of the body are strongly exerted, but those of the mind remain unemployed. It consists in a violent exertion of desire in the pursuit, and the indulgence of a cruel pleasure in the death of the game. It is an exercise which makes the limbs strong, active, and pliable; but leaves the head without improvement. I am convinced, that man is more cruel and savage, than any beast of prey; we exercise the dominion given us over these our wretched fellow-creatures, in the most tyrannical manner. If we pretend to any superiority over the beasts, it ought certainly to consist in reason; but we commonly find, that the most passionate lovers of the chace renounce this privilege, and converse only with their dogs, their horses, and other irrational animals. This renders them wild and unfeeling; and it is highly probable that they cannot be very merciful to the human species. For a man who can in cold blood torture a poor innocent animal, cannot feel much com-

passion for the distresses of his own species. — And besides, can the chase be a proper employment for a thinking mind?"

"A sovereign may undoubtedly be allowed this pleasure, provided he indulges it with moderation, and for the purpose of relaxing his mind from the many serious and often disagreeable exertions he is necessarily engaged in. It would be unjust to deny a prince every species of recreation. But can a monarch enjoy a greater pleasure, than that arising from a wise and benevolent government, from the prosperity of his dominions, and from the encouragement and protection of every useful art and science? A monarch who finds higher pleasures necessary to his happiness, is much to be pitied."

FREDERIC had scarce mounted the throne, when several inhabitants of Ruppin waited upon him, and requested the payment of very considerable sums, which they

they had lent him when prince of Prussia, and under the displeasure of his father. He at first refused to pay them, and said, they had acted wrong in having lent him any money in the situation he was then in. "This," they answered, "we cannot deny; but your Majesty will certainly highly disapprove of our conduct in refusing to pay our creditors, which is entirely out of our power, unless your Majesty graciously resolves to assist us." The king was struck with the answer; paid their demands; and in the course of his reign gave the town several proofs of his favour.

SOON after his coronation, he pronounced the following memorable words, which were afterwards publicly made known throughout his dominions: "*I will, that whenever in future my personal interest seems to clash with the general good of my subjects, the latter shall always supersede the former.*"

THE first act after his accession to the throne, by which Frederic deserved the gratitude of his subjects, was the measures he took to prevent a general famine. The severe winter of 1740 had occasioned a very great scarcity of corn throughout his dominions, and many districts began already to suffer by hunger. The king immediately ordered all his magazines to be opened, reduced the established perquisite of the miller one-half,* and by these means a general scarcity was soon prevented. In June, 1740, he ordered 800,000 bushels of corn to be imported into Pomerania from his Prussian dominions, and he then sold it to the poor at the rate of twenty groschen per bushel.†

* The miller was entitled by law to two pecks of corn out of every sack, in lieu of payment. The king reduced his allowance to one peck.

† Twenty groschen is about 2s. 11d. When a bushel of corn is sold for twenty-four groschen (about 3s. 4d.) it is thought tolerably cheap, and the industrious poor can well afford to pay for it at that price.

He likewise ordered magazines to be erected in every part of his dominions, in which corn was laid up in years of plenty, and sold again in times of scarcity or famine, at the prime cost. The dreadful famine in the years 1770 and 1771, is still in every body's memory. During this calamity, the subjects of Frederic II. had not only corn sufficient for their own subsistence, but were able to supply their neighbours.*

FREDERIC II. had the most dutiful regard for his mother as long as she lived. This was particularly evident on days of ceremony or festivity at court. Nothing could exceed the respectful attention he publicly paid her upon these occasions.

Notwithstanding the cruel and unjust treatment he suffered from his father, he never forgot or neglected the filial respect

* In Saxony, and the neighbouring provinces, many hundred people died for hunger.

and

and duty he owed him. His Memoirs of Brandenburg afford, in the life of his father, many proofs of this regard. The following anecdote shews how much he respected his memory. He heard accidentally that there still lived in Potsdam a very old invalid, who had served under his grandfather Frederic the First. He accordingly ordered his chamberlain to bring the old man to court. At the time appointed the invalid appeared at the palace, clean and very decently dressed, and was introduced. The king asked him a great variety of questions; enquired into the details of the battles and campaigns in which he had been present; in what regiments, and under what generals he had at different times served; and made a number of similar enquiries, to all which the invalid returned very satisfactory answers. The king seemed very well pleased with the old man, and entered into a long and familiar conversation with him. At last the honest veteran became so bold and talkative, that without being asked, he began as follows: "Now I

“ am talking of that, I can’t help telling
 “ your majesty a comical joke we once
 “ had when your majesty’s father was
 “ prince of Prussia. I happened then to
 “ be one of his suite. One day he took
 “ a trip to Potsdam with the prince of
 “ Dessau; and as we got to Zählendorf,
 “ we found a cowherd lying fast asleep by
 “ the road side; and for the sake of fun,
 “ and a devilish good joke it was, we cut
 “ off the tails of all his cows.”—“ Oh!”
 said the king, with a stern countenance,
 “ that is not true of my father;” and
 immediately turning about, he ordered his
 chamberlain, who stood by, to give the
 man ten dollars,* and left the astonish-
 ed and perplexed invalid, whose indiscre-
 tion in telling a circumstance unfavourable
 to the late king’s humanity, probably de-
 prived him of a comfortable provision.

1

FREDERIC disliked all unnecessary form and ceremony; and whenever the

* About 1l. 13s. 4d.

nature

nature of circumstances made a degree of ceremonious pomp necessary, he seemed to feel himself uneasy in the part he had to act. Upon his accession to the crown, it was requisite that he should receive the homage of his subjects in the capitals of his different dominions. The Marquis d'Argens accompanied him upon this tour; and had the honour of instructing the king in the ceremonial of the solemnity. After having received the homage of his Prussian dominions at Königsberg, he asked the marquis, whether he had not performed his part well? Very well indeed, replied the marquis; but I know one who did it still better. And who was that? said the king. Louis the Fifteenth, answered the marquis. Oh! said the king, and I can tell you who performs it better than either of us, and that is, Baron the Player.

BARON von Pöllnitz is well known in Germany by his historical works. He had been in the service of the grandfather

of Frederic the Second, and continued at the court of Berlin till the year 1744, when he desired his dismissal from the place he then held as master of the ceremonies, and manager of the royal theatre, in order to marry a rich widow in one of the free imperial cities. He was a man of wit and humour; and though the king never placed any confidence in him, he loved his company. His dismissal was granted and dictated by the king himself, and is perhaps the only letter of dismissal of the kind ever drawn up. It contains a prophetic history of his life, and is as follows:

“ In order to make sure of the rich widow, Pöllnitz turned Roman Catholic for the second or third time. The match however did not succeed; and the poor baron was left without money, and quite destitute. He then wrote to the king from Norimberg, requesting to be reinstated in his former post. But the king answered and said, “ I do not care a straw, whether you are a Roman Catholic, or a Protestant, but I will take you again into
“ my

“ my service, on condition that you turn
 “ Jew, and are circumcised.”

It seems that Pöllnitz wished for a more honourable letter of dismissal, and the following congé was accordingly sent him.

* We, Frederic the Second, by the
 grace of God, &c. &c.—to all whom
 this

* It may perhaps not be disagreeable to the reader, to see the original of this curious composition, and I here insert it at length, as dictated by the king.

Nous Frederic, &c. &c.—savoir faisons par les présentes, que le Baron de Pöllnitz, natif de Berlin, et autant qu'il nous est connu ; né des parens honnetes gentilhomme de chambre de feu notre pere de glorieuse memoire ; comme aussi au service de la Duchesse d'Orleans dans la meme qualite, Colonel a celui d'Espagne, Capitaine de Cavallerie dans l'Armée du feu Empereur, Camerier de Pape, Chambellan du Duc de Brunswic, Enseigne au service de Duc de Weimar, Chambellan à celui du feu Notre Pere de bien heureuse memoire, et en dernier lieu Grand-Maitre des Ceremonies au Notre ; se voyant comme inondé et emporté par le torrent des emplois militaires les plus honorables, et des plus eminentes charges de la cour ; qui successivement ont plû sur sa personne, las du monde, et entraîné par les mauvais exemples du nouveau Chambellan Montaulieu, qui peu de tems avant
 lui ;

this may concern, send greeting. Be it known unto you by these presents, that

Baron

lui, a deserté la cour: le dit Baron de Pöllnitz a recherché et tres humblement a supplié de lui accorder en grace un congé honnête pour le maintien de sa bonne reputation et renommée.

Deferant dont a sa demande, et ne jugeant a propos de refuser a sa bonne conduite le temoignage dont il nous a requis, vu les importans services qu'il a rendu a notre cour royale par ses plaisanteries, et les amusemens qu'il a procuré a Notre Pere defunct, l'espace de neuf ans; nous n'avons du nous empecher de declarer a la gloire du Baron, et declarons que pendant tout le tems qu'il a passé a notre service, il n'a été ni voleur de grand chemin, ni coupeur de bourse, ni empoisonneur, qu'il n'a point ravi et violé des jeunes filles, calomnié grossierement, ou porte la moindre atteinte a l'honneur, de qui que ce soit a Notre Cour; mais qu'il s'est toujours conduit en gallant-homme, et convenable a son origine, n'ayant jamais fait qu'un usage honnête des talens que le ciel lui a accordés pour atteindre au but de theatre, qui est a représenter agreablement et plaisamment le ridicule des hommes, enfin de les en corriger par la.

De meme il a toujours suivi tres sincerement le conseil de Bacchus, quant a la moderation et la sobriété, et pousse la charite Chretienne jusqu' a faire pratiquer aux paisans cette maxime de l'Evangile *mieux vaut donner que recevoir*: il possédoit encore
parfaitement

Baron von Pöllnitz of Berlin, born (as far as we know) of honest parents, page of the bedchamber to our late grandfather of glorious memory ; likewise in the same

parfaitement les anecdotes de nos châteaux, et maisons de plaisance et particulièrement les listes de nos vieux meubles, et favoit de reste, par ses merites se rendre utile et serviable auprès de ceux, qui connoissoient la mechanceté de son esprit, et le peu de bonté de son cœur.

Nous rendons de plus temoignage au dit Baron, qu'il ne nous a jamais fait mettre en colère, si ce n'est lorsque son importunité passant toutes les bornes du respect, effuioit de profaner et de dishonorer les cendres des nos glorieux ancêtres, d'une maniere indigne et insupportable.

Mais comme dans les plus belles contrées on rencontre des lieux incultes et steriles, que les plus beaux corps ont leurs déformites, et les tableaux des plus grandes peintres leurs défauts ; nous voulons bien aussi pardonner au dit Baron ses fautes et défauts, et nous lui accordons par la presente, quoiqu' a regret, le congé qu'il a sollicité, voulons au surplus abolir, et abolissons entierement la charge, qui lui avoit été confié, a fin que la memoire en soit pour jamais effacé parmi les hommes, ne croyant pas que personne soit digne de remplir la dite charge apres le furdit Baron.

Donne a *Potsdam*,
le 1^{ier} d'*Avril* 1744.

FREDERIC.

character

character in the service of the duchess of Orleans, colonel in the Spanish service, captain of horse in the army of the late emperor, chamberlain to the Pope, gentleman of the bedchamber to the duke of Brunswic, *ensign in the service of the duke of Weimar*,* gentleman of the bedchamber to our late father of happy memory, and latterly master of the ceremonies at our court; finding himself over-loaden and oppressed by the great weight of the most honourable military employments, and the most distinguished places at court, which have been heaped upon his single person, tired of this world, and seduced by the bad example of our new page of the bedchamber Montaulieu, who left our court a short time before him; has requested and most humbly petitioned us to grant unto him an honourable dismissal, which may preserve his good name and reputation.

* A petty prince of Germany, scarce able to keep up a small body of troops.

In compliance therefore with this his request, as we do not mean to refuse the testimony to his good conduct which he craves of us, in consideration of the important services he has rendered our court by his drolleries, and of the great amusement he provided for our late father, during the period of nine years, we cannot but declare to the honour of the said Baron, and do declare herewith, that during the time he has been in our service, he has neither practised the profession of an highwayman, nor of a pickpocket, nor of a mixer of poisons, nor has he (to our knowledge) ravished or debauched young virgins, neither has he basely calumniated, nor thrown the least aspersions upon the character of any person belonging to our court; but that he has behaved himself like a man of honour, and as became a person of his quality, having well employed the talent given him by nature, in carrying the true aim and intention of theatrical representation into effect, which is, to expose the follies of mankind in a pleasing

pleasing and agreeable manner, and by that means to endeavour to correct them.

As to his temperance and sobriety, we can testify, that he scrupulously complied with the doctrines of Bacchus. In regard to Christian Charity, he strictly adhered to that maxim of the Gospel, and (at least as far as his subjects and tenants were concerned) inculcated the same, that "to give, is more blessed than to receive." Besides this, his memory was well stored with all the anecdotes and scandal of our palaces and country seats, he had a perfect knowledge of all our old furniture, and knew well how to render himself useful to those, who knew the perverseness of his soul, and his want of goodness of heart.

We must likewise testify, that the said Baron never put us into a passion, except when he carried his impertinence so far beyond all bounds of decency, as to profane and dishonour the ashes of our noble ancestors, in a manner altogether disgraceful and insupportable.

But as the most fruitful country is not without barren and uncultivated spots, as the most beautiful person has some deformity, and as the work of the best painter may be somewhere faulty; we are well inclined to pardon the faults and failings of the said baron, we grant unto him, though with reluctance, the dismissal he has requested of us; and we moreover herewith abolish the office hitherto occupied by him, that the memory thereof may be obliterated among mankind, inasmuch as we are of opinion, that no one is worthy to be invested with the same, after its having been filled by the said baron.

Given at Potsdam,
April 1, 1744.

FREDERIC.

It seems that after the dismissal of baron Pöllnitz, he either wrote or spoke very disrespectfully of the king, and among others made use of the expression, "that he would rather tend a herd of swine, than be in the service of a great prince." He however heartily repented having left the service of so good a master, and sent the king

king an historical work he had written, and at the same time a letter, requesting his opinion of the book, and praying to be reinstated in his former office.

The king answered his letter, in as far as related to his book, with his own hand, censuring many parts of the work with great freedom; but as the letter itself cannot be interesting to the English reader (as the book to which it relates is not translated into our language) I shall not trouble him with the perusal of any part of it but the conclusion, which proceeding from the pen of an unlimited monarch to a man who had grossly offended him as a subject, though he might perhaps claim his regard as an author, is well worth recording.

* “ Now and then you are too prolix in your descriptions of particular ceremonies and of trifling incidents, the details of which can interest nobody. These pas-

H 3

sages

* Et par ci par là vous donnez dans le diffus sur le matieres des ceremonies et sur des details des particuliers qui n'interessent personne, comme j'ai aussi pris

sages I have taken the liberty to mark with a pencil in the margin, in order that you may correct or expunge them. In short, I wish you would either write in a more serious manner, and upon subjects of real importance, or confine yourself to anecdote, which is more adapted to your naturally gay and lively stile, and in which you cannot fail of success. I do not, however, wish you to confine yourself to my judgment alone, but to consult your friends and hear their opinions.

“ Adieu! I wish you health and spirits, and the rest may be easily rectified and put in order.

FREDERIC.”

pris la liberté de le marquer en marginale avec du crayon pour que vous puissiez l'effacer. En un mot, ou écrivez gravement, et mettez plus d'étoffe dans votre ouvrage, ou tenez vous en aux anecdotes que vous ornerez par votre stile naturel, qui est badin et enjoué: toutefois ne vous en tenez point à mon jugement, et consultez vos amis qui pourront vous dire leurs sentiments.

Adieu, baron, je vous souhaite santé et vie, et tout la reste sera facile à redresser et à faire.

FREDERIC.

Then

Then follows in another hand, an answer to the baron's request, to be reinstated in his office. It is full of reproaches for his ingratitude, impertinence and folly, and we find by it, that the king, besides many other favours bestowed upon him, had paid the baron's debts to the amount of 6000 dollars, and protected him against the great number of enemies he had made by his impertinence and indiscretion. He however agrees to pardon him and suffer him to return to Berlin; but upon the following conditions.

1st. That a proclamation be made throughout Berlin, that no one dare, under the penalty of 100 ducats, lend baron Pollnitz any money, or deliver to him any goods upon credit.

2d. That baron Pollnitz be positively prohibited from conversing with any of the foreign ministers, either at their own or other houses, and particularly from reporting to them what may be said at the king's table, or in other familiar conversation at court.

H 4

3d. That

3d. That whenever he shall be invited to the king's table, and see the rest of the guests in a good and convivial humour, he by all means avoid his usual illnatured habit of putting on the melancholy face of a cuckold, but that he endeavour to keep up and encrease the reigning good humour of the company, &c. &c.

The king had added the following in his own hand writing.

* "If you rather chuse to feed swine than serve princes, as you have been pleased to express yourself, you cannot long be out of place, and you will find employment enough in Westphalia without any assistance from me."

"Go, you are a miscreant! and if I save you from the distress in which your folly

* Si vous aime mieux servir des cochons que des grands princes, comme vous l'avez dit vous ne pouvez manquer de conditions, et vous trouverez en Westphalie de l'employ sans que vous ayez besoin de moi.

Allez, vous etes un indigne, et si je vous tire de la misere, ou vos folies et vos impertinences vous ont reduit, c'est ne que par pitie, car votre conduite meriteroit, que l'on vous enferme entre quatre murailles a jamais.

FREDERIC.

Au Baron de Pollnitz.

and

and impertinence have involved you, I do it merely from motives of pity, for by your conduct you have deserved to be confined for life within the walls of a dungeon."

It seems that baron Pöllnitz was recalled to Berlin, and continued in his office as manager of the royal theatre to the end of the second Silesian war, during which time he was frequently at court, though he never entirely recovered his majesty's favour.

* General Walrawe had been condemned to imprisonment for life, in the fortress of Magdeburg. During his con-

* The King of Prussia is well known to have been an enemy to revealed religion, and to have looked upon every part of the books of the Old and New Testament, excepting those relating to morality, or probable historical fact, as the reveries of an heated imagination. But notwithstanding this, he was better acquainted with the contents of the scriptures, than many who make them their rule of faith, and quoted them upon many occasions in a ludicrous manner. In this inferior species of wit he was supposed to excel, as the following anecdotes will shew.

finement he wrote an humble petition to the king, which the governor, on account of its singularity, sent to his majesty. It contained nothing but the 88th psalm, which to save the reader the trouble of looking for his bible, and finding the place, I shall insert at length.

1 *O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee:*

2 *Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;*

3 *For my soul is full of troubles; and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*

4 *I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength:*

5 *Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.*

6 *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.*

7 *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.*

8 *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination*

nation unto them; I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.

9 *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.*

10 *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.*

11 *Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?*

12 *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?*

13 *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord: and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*

14 *Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?*

15 *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.*

16 *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.*

17 *They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.*

18 *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.*

In

In answer to this petition, the king ordered immediately the 101st psalm to be copied and sent him, which is as follows:

1 *I will sing of mercy and judgement: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.*

2 *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way, O when wilt thou come unto me! I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*

3 *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside: it shall not cleave to me.*

4 *A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.*

5 *Who so privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer.*

6 *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.*

7 *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*

8 *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land: that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.*

A

A VERY young clergyman who had just left college, presented a petition to the king, requesting that his majesty would appoint him inspector* in a certain place, where a vacancy had just happened. As it was an office of much consequence, the king was offended at the presumption and importunity of so young a man, and instead of any answer to the petition, he wrote underneath: II. Book of Samuel, chap. x. verse 5; and returned it. The young clergyman was eager to examine the quotation, but to his great disappointment found the words: *Tarry at Jericho until your beard is grown.*

The Rev. Mr. Kletschke, chief chaplain† to part of the army, requested in a memorial, that the king would grant him

* Inspector, nearly answers to our dean; he has especially the care of all schools in his district.

† Feld-probst, *Germ.* has the same degree of authority over the chaplain of regiments, that the dean exercises over the inferior clergy in his diocese.

a right

a right to appoint all chaplains to the regiments under his care, and endeavoured by many arguments to prove that this right more properly belonged to him, than to the commanders of the several regiments. The king in answer, wrote under the memorial: "*Your kingdom is not of this world.*"

The king had ordered piazzas to be erected round the church of St. Nicholas, at Potsdam, by which means the lower range of windows was entirely covered, and the church deprived of some light. The overseers and churchwardens were dissatisfied, and presented a memorial to the king, requesting that he would discontinue the building, and pull down what had already been erected. But their memorial was returned, and the following was written at the bottom in the king's own hand: "*Blessed are they who do not see, and yet believe.*"

The

The king observed upon a march, that one of the chaplains was very well mounted. "So," said he, "that is against all rule, for it is written: Go, into all the world, and teach;" and you ride!—O! replied the chaplain, if your majesty understood the original, you would find the words, "Take care that you get on in this world."

The clergy of Newmark petitioned the king, that they might be at liberty to levy the tythes of grain in kind, as formerly, and not be obliged to compound for them in money according to the valuation of the provincial court. The king returned them the following answer:

"The regulations in regard to the
 "tythe of grain must continue as at
 "present; and if one hundred clergymen
 "throw up their benefices on this ac-
 "count to-day, tomorrow I can provide
 "one thousand in their room.

"Soldiers must have bread; the clergy
 "ought to be satisfied with heavenly
 "manna;

“ manna; for their kingdom is not of
 “ this world, Peter and Paul never le-
 “ vied the tythe of grain, and in the
 “ whole New Testament I find no where
 “ an account of the apostles barns.

Potsdam,
May 12, 1780.

FREDERIC.”

A clergyman sent the king a treatise he
 had written upon the Sin against the Holy
 Ghost, and received the following answer
 in the king's own hand:

“ Your Sin against the Holy Ghost

“ I duly received, and pray God

“ that he may have your senses

“ in his holy keeping.

FREDERIC.”

The nobles of Valangin deposed a clergy-
 man of the reformed religion, for having
 preached against eternal damnation. The
 clergyman applied to the king for redress,
 who

who immediately issued an order, commanding them to replace the clergyman in his benefice, and to act in future in a more tolerant and rational manner. In consequence of this, the nobles presented a long remonstrance, in which they in the most submissive language insisted upon their right to depose the clergyman, and positively refused to reinstate him, as the people were determined to hear nothing said against the doctrine of eternal damnation. The king, who did not chuse on this occasion to dispute their privileges, but yet had always a great objection to contradict any orders he had issued, sent back their remonstrance with these words added at the bottom,—*If my loving subjects in Valangin choose to be eternally damned, I have nothing to say against it.**

FREDERIC.

AMONG other duties enjoined by the rules of the capuchin monks, they are

* Si mes sujets de Valangin veulent être damnés éternellement, je n'y trouve rien à redire.

I

obliged

obliged to lend every assistance in their power, towards quenching any conflagration that may happen. In the second Silesian war, the royal palace, which stood next to the monastery of the capuchins, was set on fire by the enemy and totally destroyed. When the king afterwards came to Breslau, the monks waited upon him to pay their respects, and boasted, *that they had assisted with all their power when his palace was on fire.* "I thought so," said the king, "for I see it is entirely destroyed."

A MAN,* who upon his settling in the king's dominions, had received the usual

* In order to encrease the population of his states, which had considerably suffered by the long and bloody wars he carried on, the King of Prussia invited, by considerable proffered advantages, people of all countries and denominations to settle in his dominions, and by this means colonies were every where established. The king built for every new colonist a small house, provided them with utensils of agriculture, or trade, and remitted for the first ten years, all taxes upon their property and persons.

advantages

advantages given to new colonists, who had had a house and cattle provided for him, and had been furnished with every other necessary, was dissatisfied with his situation, and in hopes to induce the king to grant him still more, waited upon him, as he travelled through the place, and told him that he should leave the country with his wife and children, and go where *he could be much better off*. But the king, instead of encouraging him to stay, or making him any further promises, as he expected, replied coolly: "You are quite in the right there, my good friend, for if I knew a place where I should be better off, than where I am, I would certainly go there myself."

THE King of Prussia had very strictly ordered that no officer should wear any dress but his uniform. Notwithstanding this, a young officer dressed himself in a plain coat, and walked with a lady in the royal gardens at Sans-Souci, as he supposed the king was gone to Potsdam. But sud-

denly, as he turned at the end of a vista, he met the king, who immediately asked him: "*Who are you, sir?*" The officer, not having even taken the precaution to change his sword, found himself at once betrayed, but had still presence of mind enough to say: "I am an officer, but am here incognito." The king was pleased with the answer, and said: "*Then take care the king don't see you.*"—And walked on.

THE King was once leaning out of a window in the palace, and observed through an opening between his arm and his body, that one of his pages took his snuff-box from the table, looked at it, and at last took a pinch. The king soon after shut the window, took the snuff-box, and asked the page how he liked it? The page was alarmed at the question, and for some time was unable to give an answer, but said at last trembling: "Very much, sire." "Well then," replied

plied the king, "take it, it is your's; for the use of two persons I think it too small."

THE King of Prussia had heard that a corporal in his regiment of body guards, who was well known as a remarkably handsome and brave young man, wore out of vanity a watch chain, suspended from a leaden bullet in his fob. He had the curiosity to enquire into the circumstance himself, and an opportunity was contrived, that the king should meet the corporal as by chance, without his suspecting any design. "Apropos, corporal," said the king, "you are a brave fellow, to have "spared enough from your pay to buy "yourself a watch." *Corporal.* Brave, I flatter myself that I am; but as to my watch, it is of little signification.—*King.* (*Pulling out a gold watch set with diamonds*) "By my watch it is five; what o'clock are you, pray?" *Corporal* (*pulling out with trembling hand his bullet*) My watch tells me neither five nor six,

but shews me clearly the death I am to die in your majesty's service. *King*. "Well
" then, that you may likewise see the
" hour among the twelve, in which you
" are to die in my service, I will give
" you mine."

THE advantageous terms granted to the King of Prussia at the peace of 1763, were in a great measure obtained by the abilities in negociation of that eminent minister, count von Hertzberg. When after the conclusion of the peace, he waited upon his majesty, the king addressed him in these words: "My dear Hertzberg, you
" have concluded the peace, as I have
" conducted the war: One against many."

GENERAL Winterfeld was, as is well known, one of the first generals of the late king. He was once ordered upon an expedition of great importance, and the king promised him an army of not less than 40,000 men for the undertaking.

But

But upon mustering his troops, Winterfeld found that there were hardly 12,000 effective men. He complained, therefore, to the king; but Frederic answered:—
 “Your army is in my opinion strong
 “enough; when I consider that *you* are
 “at the head of it.”

THE King marched forward with his army, and left general Winterfeld behind him. He had already taken leave of the general, had mounted his horse, and rode on to a considerable distance, but suddenly he turned back, and alighting, he embraced him and said: “I had almost forgotten to give you the only instructions
 “you stand in need of: they are, that
 “you preserve your life, for my sake.”
 But a few days after the general died upon the bed of honour, and the king felt his loss severely.

IN the year 1766, the king sent a very elegant set of Berlin porcelain, as a present

to the Imperial general prince Lichtenstein, and accompanied it with a polite letter, in which was the following passage: "The present I send you is brittle, "and liable to be easily destroyed: but "the regard I feel for the merits of so "worthy and eminent a general is strong "and can never be effaced."

IN the year 1757, a party of Prussian hussars took the courier prisoner, who was entrusted with the Imperial diploma, by which general Laudon was created field-marshal *. The king immediately sent it to him by a trumpeter, and congratulated him very politely upon his promotion.

WHEN the late king of Prussia and the emperor of Germany met at Neisse, the principal officers of both sovereigns were invited to a magnificent entertain-

* General-feld-wachtmeister, Germ. is a rank unknown in our army.

ment. General Laudon was among the guests, and sat down near the bottom of the table. But the king of Prussia, who observed it, called to him, and said, "Come up here, General Laudon, I would always rather see you at my side, than opposite to me."

* WHEN the famous Chevalier d'Eon was first discovered to have assumed the character of a sex she had no right to, the king joked with the French ambassador at Berlin upon the subject, and among others said, "This is always the case with you Frenchmen: when we think we are engaged with a man, we in the end find that we have a woman to deal with."

* The king of Prussia, like most other wits, very frequently said a severe thing, when it was by no means deserved. But had any one the courage to answer it, he seldom retained any ill will against the persons who took that liberty. This will appear from many of the following anecdotes.

WHEN,

WHEN, upon his accession to the government of Silesia, the king received the homage of the nobles of that province, he created, according to an ancient custom, several new noblemen.

Some years afterwards, one of these new-made noblemen rode in the suite of the king, as he made his annual tour through Silesia, and took care to put himself so often in the king's way, that he could not but take notice of his importunity; and asked him, Pray, Sir, who are you? "I am, Sire," replied the nobleman, "one of those whom your majesty, upon receiving the homage of the Silesian nobles, was pleased to exalt to the rank of noblemen."

My first experiment then has succeeded very badly, returned the king.

AS the king once travelled in Westphalia, he came to a small place called Schauen. This place, and a small part of
of

of the country round it, is a free independent barony of the empire, and belongs to the Barons von Grote. As the king stopped to change horses, the lord of the place waited upon him, and addressed him in a speech, in which he expressed the satisfaction he felt in seeing his Prussian majesty in his territories. The king smiled, and said to one of his suite, *Voilà deux souverains, qui se rencontrent.*

A NOBLEMAN presented a memorial to the king, requesting a favour. In this memorial the nobleman had used the expression, that he was one of *the unhappy family of ******. Whether the king thought the request improper, or had other reasons for displeasure, is not known; but he returned the memorial, and had written at the bottom :

“ I cannot conceive how the family of
 “ ***** should be *unhappy*, as they are
 “ all *rich and stupid.*”

IN a small town through which the king of Prussia travelled, the burgo-master (whose name was Dederic) waited upon him, and began a set speech with these words :

Thou demi-god, great Frederic !

The king stopped him short, and added :

Thou fool-complete, little Dederic ! *

Which put an end at once to his sublime harangue.

A YOUNG nobleman returned from Paris, where he had spent the greatest part of his fortune, and had acquired nothing but a complete knowledge of all the taverns, brothels, coffee, and gaming

* The point loses considerably in English, but is in the original uncommonly neat :

O halber-gott, du grosser Friederich,

O ganzer-narr, du kleiner Diederich,

houses

houses of that city ; soon after his arrival, he petitioned the king to give him some lucrative post. In answer to his petition, he received a royal official cover, which enclosed, to the great surprize and disappointment of the young gentleman, *The Ace of Diamonds.*

WHENEVER the king of Prussia stopped in his travels in any small town, he entered, while his horses were changed, into conversation with the burgomaster, or other principal magistrate of the place. As he hated every thing that had the appearance of affectation, he seldom conversed long with any person, in whose language, dress, or behaviour he observed an embarrassed or conceited precision, but either broke off the discourse abruptly, or gave his conversation a severe and satirical turn. But wherever he found an honest open character, especially if rendered still more respectable by years, he

3

indulged

indulged the most easy familiarity.* This will appear by the following narrative.

The burgomaster P—— of A—— was a very sensible and worthy old man, and whenever the king travelled through the town, he familiarly shook the old man by the hand. He once conversed with him longer than usual, gave him some advice regarding his precarious state of health, and seemed to look with uncommon pleasure at the venerable silver locks, which hung down upon his shoulders. At parting, he laid his hand upon the old man's shoulders, and said :

Tu es Consul Romanus.

* Upon his annual tours through his dominions, the king of Prussia very frequently left his suite, and entered into conversation with any common man he might meet. By this means he not only acquired a degree of popularity among the lower class of his subjects, which they carried almost to enthusiasm, but obtained a knowledge of the detail of their mode of subsisting, which by giving him an interest in their private concerns, frequently led him to support them against the rich and noble, where they ought to have been severely punished.

P—— died soon after, and a Mr. L—— was elected burgomaster in his room. L—— was a worthy man, but had in his dress and appearance something uncommonly stiff, spoke with a studied precision, and pronounced every syllable separately. The king came the year following again to A——; and the moment the carriage stopped, he looked out of the window, and asked for “his old friend “P——.” But as soon as he heard that he was dead, he drew up the glass, threw himself back in the carriage, and did not speak a word more.

The next time he arrived at A——, he took a nearer view of the new burgomaster, and read at once in his appearance, the whole of his formal and precise character. The following conversation then took place:

King. Pray, Sir, who are you?

Burgomaster. An-please-your-majesty I-I-am-the burgomaster of A——.

King. Your name, Sir, if you please?

Burg. My name is L——.

King.

King. And you are burgomaster in this town?

Burg. Yes, please your majesty.

King. Then *you* are the Atlas of A——! How many souls live here?

Burg. One thousand,-nine hundred,-and thirteen.

King. And all these souls are governed by your providence?

Burg. I govern merely under the auspices of your majesty.

King. So! So! But tell me, Sir, what new building is this?

Burg. It is the new manufactory; and the expences incurred by the building *thereof*, your majesty has graciously been pleased to defray.

King. And what is manufactured *there-in*?

Burg. Light woollen stuffs.

King. Light? Why not heavy stuffs? Why not cloth?

Burg. Please your majesty, we have no fulling mill.

King. Then we must build one.

Burg. That cannot be done.

King.

King. Why not?

Burg. Please your majesty, we have no water.

King. Your most humble servant. Close to the town I just now passed a body of water, *large enough to drown the whole right worshipful bench of aldermen.* Drive on!

FREDERIC II. once travelled through a small town, and observed upon his entrance at the gate, a man who continually bowed to him. He enquired who he was; I am, replied the man, the burgomaster of this place, and inspector of the different manufactories. So! said the king, and how many manufactories have you in this town? The burgomaster enumerated them; and assured the king, that they were all in the most flourishing condition. "I am glad of it," replied the king; "but can you tell me, how many threads are usually taken to the warp, and how many to the weft of a piece?"

K

This

This question was totally unexpected, and too deep for the inspector ! He could give no answer ; and his embarrassment appeared in his looks. “ Sir,” said the king, “ you are a blockhead ; go and inform yourself better about your manufactories.”

IN another town the king likewise enquired, “ how many different manufactories were carried on in the town.” Unfortunately, the burgomaster was hard of hearing, and did not rightly understand the king’s question. But as he perceived that the king had fixed his eyes upon his wig, which was of a most curious shape and colour, he bowed, and said, “ One white, one black, and one grey one. “ The first is worn by the rector, the second by one of the aldermen, the third (*bowing*) by your humble servant.” The king laughed heartily, and drove on.

THE common council of a small town in Churmarck imprisoned one of the citizens, upon an accusation *that he blasphemed God, the king, and the right worshipful the common council.* The burgo-master reported the affair to his majesty, and humbly begged to know his majesty's pleasure in regard to the punishment of so atrocious an offender. The following was written upon the margin of the report, and returned to him :

“ That the prisoner has blasphemed
“ God, is a proof that he does not know
“ him ; his blasphemy against me, I for-
“ give him ; but as he has blasphemed
“ the right worshipful the common coun-
“ cil, I will punish him in an exemplary
“ manner, and send him to Spandau to
“ be imprisoned for half an hour.

FREDERIC.”

THE nobility of Churmarck petitioned the king, that they might be allowed the

free importation of arrack and rum for their own use, and be excused from paying the duties of excise upon these articles. The king returned their petition, and had written underneath:

“ No! it would be highly indecent
“ in my nobility, to habituate themselves
“ to drink drams.

FREDERIC.”

THE Rev. Mr. S——, rector of the parish of N—— at Potsdam, was a rich but covetous man. The king had heard, that whenever he attended a wedding or christening, he employed the boys belonging to the choir, to carry home the dishes which he found an opportunity of taking from the table. Among other improvements at Potsdam, the king rebuilt the parsonage-house belonging to the N—— church, and the rector delivered in a petition, requesting that he might have two arched pantries built upon the ground floor. As the king left the in-

ternal disposition of the houses he erected entirely to the fancy of the inhabitants, and only insisted upon the front being built according to his plan, he was much displeased that so rich a man should trouble him with so trifling a request, in order to avoid the expence of making the alteration himself. He therefore returned the petition, with the following written in the margin :

“ You are much mistaken in me
“ indeed, if you suppose I will
“ provide dens and caverns for
“ you, to hide your prey and
“ booty in.

FREDERIC.”

A COLONEL in the king's army had provided himself a post-coach, and had given his postilion a post-horn,* which he

* In the Prussian dominions, and throughout the greatest part of Germany, the stages run under the sanction and at the expence of government; and every carriage they meet (excepting a dung-cart) is obliged

he blew wherever he travelled in the country. The post-office complained to the king of this infringement upon their privileges, and the king wrote the following letter in consequence to the colonel :

“ My dear Colonel von ———

“ You are at liberty to have as many
“ horns as you please, excepting only the
“ post-horn, which would be against the
“ established rule.

FREDERIC.”

IN his annual tours into Prussia, the king usually entered into conversation with the farmer of the royal domains at ———. This gentleman was very corpulent ; and notwithstanding the king was strongly prejudiced against every body who was fat, he made an exception in this instance, and was very partial to the farmer, who

to get out of their way upon the road. They use a horn, something like a French-horn, with which they give notice of their approach.

WAS

was a very sensible man. As he stopt at — in one of his tours, he found in the room of his old friend, a long meagre figure, who came to pay him his respects. "Who are you, Sir?" said the king. "I am the farmer of your majesty's domains in this neighbourhood," replied the gentleman. "That can't be," said the king; "my farmer is a very fat man." The man your majesty alludes to, returned the farmer, is déad, and I have been appointed to fill his place. "So! So!" said the king, and drove on. He afterwards observed to lieutenant general —, "this man will be a great expence to me, before I shall make him as fat as his predecessor."

THE king had a very mean opinion of the honesty of the contractors who supplied his army with provisions in the second Silesian war, and he believed he had been imposed upon by all of them without exception. The widow of one of these contractors once delivered a petition

tition to the king, representing that her husband had been many years in his majesty's service; that notwithstanding the many opportunities he had had of making his fortune, his honesty had kept him poor, and that she and her children were after his death reduced to want; she therefore requested relief. The king did not grant her petition, but returned it, and had written underneath: "I tied the ass
" to the manger; it was his own fault
" that he did not eat."

THE ladies of the two presidents of the courts of justice and revenue at Cleve, were continually disputing about their respective ranks; and the lady of the president of the court of justice insisted, that in all public places she was entitled to a rank superior to the other. This enraged her rival to such a degree, that she wrote to the king, and prayed that he would decide which of the two ladies had a right *to go first*. The king wrote

wrote back to her the following laconic answer.

“ The greatest fool goes first.”

FREDERIC.

THE king once observed from a window in the palace, that a great concourse of people were reading something stuck up against a wall, and he sent one of his pages down to see what it was. The page returned and informed him, that the paper contained satirical observations upon the new regulations in the collection of the duties upon coffee.* “ Go down again,” said

* Coffee, in the Prussian dominions, and in most parts of Germany, is the same *indispensably necessary* article of food, that tea is in the British dominions. In one of the king of Prussia’s decrees, laying an additional impost upon this commodity, he complains, that every rank of his subjects, from the nobleman down to the labourer and washerwoman, seemed to think, that their very existence depended upon the use of coffee; and indeed the complaint was very well founded. He in the same decree strongly recommends beer-soups, and other home-brewed articles, for the
breakfasts

said the king, " and get the bill passed
" lower, that they may read it more

breakfasts of his loving subjects, but in vain: for when coffee became too dear to be drank in quantity by the lower class of people, they roasted the roots of parsley and other vegetables, and mixed them with a small quantity of real coffee; and the smugglers found advantages sufficient to induce them to run any risk in importing the commodity clandestinely. Duty after duty was laid upon coffee; and at last the king erected offices, in which all the coffee drank by his subjects (except the nobility, clergy, and men of letters, who had the privilege of roasting for themselves), was to be roasted, and sold to them in tin cannisters, sealed with the king's seal, and signed by two excise officers. As England, among other causes, lost America by interfering with the breakfasts of her colonies, so the king of Prussia, by this measure, lost more popularity, than he had gained by the most beneficent acts of his government.

Soon after this regulation had been made, the king crossed the parade early one morning, and observed a large painting hung up against the walls of the palace. He went nearer to view it, and saw that it represented himself in his waistcoat-sleeves, and an apron about his waist, turning a coffee-roaster. " I think," said he smiling, " to one of his attendants, " the portrait might, with a little alteration, be made " much more like me." He then went away, and let the picture hang where it was.

" conve-

“conveniently; it is too high for
“them.”

THE name of Quintus Icilius was originally Guichard. He was the son of a manufacturer of earthen ware in Magdeburg, when the king took him into his service, and changed his name. It happened, that soon after the king had established the manufactory of porcelain at Berlin at his own expence and risk, Quintus contradicted something he said at table. “Hold your tongue,” said the king, with a degree of anger, “how should you know any thing about the matter; you are but the son of a potter?”——“How can now your majesty reproach me with being the son of a potter,” replied Quintus, “when you are a potter yourself?” The king could not refrain from laughing, and gave the conversation another turn.

DURING

DURING his majesty's last painful illness, that eminent physician, Dr. Zimmerman of Hanover, attended him. One day, when he waited upon his majesty, the king said to him, "You have, Sir, "I suppose, helped many a one into "another world." "Not so many," replied Zimmerman, "as your majesty, nor with as much honour to myself!"

THE bishop of Ermeland lost a great portion of his revenues, in consequence of the occupation of part of Poland by the king of Prussia. Soon after this event, in the year 1773, he waited upon his majesty at Potsdam, and the king asked him, "if, after what had happened, he "could have still any friendship left for "him?" Sire, said the prelate, I shall never forget my duty as a good subject to my sovereign. "I am," replied the king, "still your very good friend, and "presume likewise much upon your "friend-

“ friendship for me ; for should St. Peter
 “ refuse me the entrance into Paradise, I
 “ hope you will have the goodness to
 “ hide me under your mantle, and to
 “ take me along with you.” Sire, re-
 turned the bishop, *that will scarce be
 possible ; your majesty has cut it too short,
 to admit of my carrying any contraband
 goods under it.* The king felt the reproof,
 but shewed no mark of displeasure, by
 which the good humour of the company
 could be interrupted.

THE king observed at a review, an
 officer who had a large scar upon his face,
 and said to him, “ This, I suppose, you
 “ got in an alehouse.” “ Yes, Sire, re-
 plied the officer, in an alehouse at Col-
 lin, where your majesty paid the reckon-
 ing.*

* In the bloody battle at Collin, the king's
 troops were entirely defeated.

GENERAL

GENERAL von ——— was very fond of company and cards. Upon a certain occasion, when he marched at the head of his regiment, the king called out to him, "General, your regiment breaks rank : but it is no wonder ; your time is entirely taken up with cards." The general immediately commanded, Halt ! and turning to the king, said, "Here, Sire, the question is not about my cards : but I humbly beg your majesty will view the regiment, and see whether the troops break rank or not." The king viewed the ranks, went away, did not say one word, and it was evident, that he was more dissatisfied with himself, than with the general ; nor was there ever afterwards reason to suppose, that he was displeased with the frankness of the officer.

THE impertinence of one of the king's pages was so great, that the king in a passion gave him a box on the ear,
and

and discomposed the dress of his hair. The page immediately turned about to a looking-glass, and began to adjust his curls. "Scoundrel," cried the king, "what impudence is this?" "I should be sorry, Sire, replied the page, if the people in the antichamber should perceive what has happened between us." The king laughed heartily, went away, and left the page in the room.

DURING the siege of Schweidnitz, the king was dissatisfied with his engineers. He once spoke very severely in the trenches to a staff-officer of this corps, and said to him at last, "Go to the devil."* The officer walked away without saying another word; but he had not gone far, when the king called him

* "Scheer euch zum Teufel," was, with the king of Prussia, the constant form of dismissal to every one, with whom he thought he had reason to be displeased; and was commonly followed by disagreeable consequences to the person it was spoken to.

back,

back, and said, "It is my pleasure, that
 "you continue the siege, and then you
 "may go about your business." The
 officer replied immediately, "I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the liberty you have granted me, to risk the loss of a leg, or an arm, before I am dismissed your majesty's service. But I have great need of both, to save your majesty the trouble and expence of having me *carried* out of your majesty's dominions." The king smiled; desired him to continue in his service; and made him a handsome present.

A PEASANT and his wife came to the king, and presented a petition. He asked them what they wanted; and when they had told him, "you must," said he, "go to my court of justice for redress in this business." "We have been there already," said the peasant. "Well then, I cannot help you neither," replied the king. "Come, come along," said the peasant to his wife, you see there's
 nothing

nothing to be done, *he and the court both whistle to the same tune.*" The king laughed heartily at the odd expression, and received their petition.

WHILE the king was laying out his garden at Sans-Souci, a mill was in his way, and he ordered the miller to be treated with for the purchase of it. The miller was loth to sell his mill, and the king offered to build him another in any part of the country he should chuse. But all was in vain, the miller would not part with the old family mill. "Don't you know," said the king, "that if I please I may take your mill, turn you out, and not pay you a farthing for it?" "Aye," replied the miller, "that you might, if there was no such thing as a supreme court of justice at Berlin." The king laughed heartily, left him his mill, and altered the whole plan of his garden.

L

AFTER

AFTER the second Silesian war, the king travelled over all his dominions. Upon his arrival at Cleve, he ordered the public accounts to be laid before him. In examining them, he found to his great surprise, a considerable annual sum, paid out of the revenue arising from the royal forests, to the monks of the monastery of Minorites in the town, and enquired of the president of the chamber, M. Bessel, into the cause. The president informed him, that the abovementioned sum was left by the late duke to the guardian and monks of the cloyster, on condition that they should pray a certain number of masses daily for his soul. Upon this, the king expressed a wish to speak with the guardian, and having appointed a certain hour, he drove to the monastery. When he arrived he found the canons placed in two rows, and as soon as he entered, they struck up the Ambrosian hymn. "Who are these?" said the king. "They are," replied the president, "the monks who read the masses for the soul of the late duke."

duke." The king stopped, and the guardian approached respectfully to meet him.

King. Are you the guardian of the monastery?

Monk. Yes, sire.

King. You monks, I see, receive a considerable sum of money out of my forest revenues; and pray what do you do for it?

Monk. This money, sire, was left us by the former dukes, and in return we read masses for their souls, in order to procure their release from purgatory.

King. Poor creatures! they have been there a long time! do you not soon expect them to be released? I should be very happy to hear of it.

Monk. That is a difficult point, sire, to determine beforehand, but the moment they get loose, I will dispatch a courier to your majesty at Potsdam, with the news.

The king laughed, and said to president Bessel, "There is nothing to be done with this man: he was certainly brought up among the jesuits."

GENERAL Zarembo had a very long Polish name. The king had heard of it, and one day asked him: "Pray, Zarembo, what is properly your name?" The general told him the whole of his long name. "O! said the king, "the devil himself has not such a name." "Neither," replied Zarembo, "is he any relation of my family."

A grenadier of the first battalion of foot guards, stood centinel in the royal garden at Potsdam. A girl for whom he had a partiality, visited him as he was upon duty, and he laughed and joked with her very loudly. Suddenly the girl screamed out, and ran off. The soldier was surprised, looked about, and saw the king within a few yards of him. In a hurry he snatched up his musket and presented. "Sirrah!" said the king, "what have you been about, don't you know my orders?" "O! please your majesty," said the frightened soldier, "pray now do not tell my captain,

tain, he is a terrible fellow; I shall be flogged to death if you do!" The king laughed, and ordered an advance of eight* groschen per month to be paid him from his own private purse, in addition to his pay.

THE king once rose very early, and walked into the garden at Sans-Souci. He there observed a boy employed by the gardener, who seemed very busy in pruning a row of peach trees; as the boy had not worked long in the garden, he did not know the king. "You are very early at work to day," said the king. "Aye," replied the boy, "that's what I must, for if the old bear (meaning the king) comes into the garden, and does not find the work done, nothing is right." "Bravo! my son," said the king, "I would have you always think so,"—and walked further.

* About one shilling.

AFTER a life of fatigue and honour, in the king's army, general Butler took his dismissal, and retired to the small town of Ziefar, in order to spend the remainder of his life in peace and quiet. It so happened, that it was the custom in the town, that just before the general's house, the swineherd blew his horn every morning at break of day, in order to collect the pigs of the town to drive them upon the common.* This disturbed the general's sleep in the most disagreeable manner, and he sent his servant to desire the swineherd that some other spot might be found out, where the pigs could be as easily collected. But the man insisted that he must assemble his herd there, and no where else. The general applied to the magistracy, but in vain; he was told "it

* This is the custom in many German towns, both in regard to pigs and geese. They are so well acquainted with the melodious tones of the horn, that they all spontaneously collect about their driver in the morning, and when he brings them in again at night, each goes of itself to its proper owner.

was

was impossible to dispense with a custom, sanctioned by its antiquity, and established time immemorial. They presumed the general did not come to their town with a view of infringing upon their ancient rights and privileges." General Butler therefore ordered his servant, the next time the swineherd should appear, to drive him away with the horse-whip.

This act of violence so enraged the burgomaster and council, that a formal complaint was immediately made to the king, stating, that by this act the ancient rights, privileges, immunities, and liberties of the corporation were grossly infringed upon. The king wrote under their complaint, "Ye are a set of scoundrels, all of ye." And to general Butler he wrote:

"My dear general Butler,

"I am sorry you have settled in a town where you are not even safe from the swineherd. Somewhere or other in my dominions, you might have found a

“ more comfortable retreat. However,
“ in future, I think you will not be
“ troubled by them.”

IT has already been mentioned, that general Rothenburg possessed in a very eminent degree, the confidence and friendship of the King of Prussia. During his last illness, the king frequently sat for hours by his bedside, and when he received the news of his death, he left his palace, half-dressed, and ran across the street to the bed of his friend. Upon seeing his lifeless body he was inconsolable, the tears ran down his cheeks, and in hopes to recall a life so dear to him, he sent immediately for a surgeon, ordered a vein to be opened, and held the basin himself. But it was in vain; the king retired in the deepest distress, shut himself up for several days in his palace, and indulged his grief in private.

UPON

UPON the king of Prussia's return from the review in Pomerania, in the year 1767, he received the news of the death of prince Henry of Prussia. This melancholy news affected him in such a manner, that he stopped that day in the town he then was in, Bernau, and took his lodgings at the house of the French clergyman, M. Gualtieri. He conversed much with this worthy man, and was glad, as he expressed himself, to find here a man of good sense and piety. The comfort he received by Gualtieri's conversation was not forgotten. Gualtieri was invited to Berlin, and considerably promoted. But the unexpected death of the prince, made a melancholy impression upon the king's mind, which he could not easily conceal. This among others appears from the text he himself chose for the funeral sermon, which was, *My ways are not your ways, nor are my thoughts your thoughts.*

GENERAL Ziethen, as age and infirmities advanced upon him, once fell asleep at the royal table. "Let him sleep," said the king, "he has watched long enough for our safety."

Notwithstanding the general's great age, he wrote to the king requesting leave to attend the review in 1786. The king answered him in the following letter, which does as much honour to this old and faithful officer, as to the friendly and humane character of the king.

"My dear general von Ziethen,

"It would give me sincere pleasure to see at the review, and at the head of his regiment, a general, who has so eminently signalized himself in my service, and you have therefore my full consent to appear simply in your pelisse, without the incumbrance of a dress uniform. But should the weather prove too cold, I conjure you to spare your health, and rather not to appear in the field, than subject yourself

to an indisposition, by your too ardent zeal for my service. After such long and glorious services as you have performed, you are well entitled to the rights of a Roman veteran. This is the advice of your gracious king.

Potsdam,
May 17, 1786.

FREDERIC."

When the king was informed of the death of general Ziethen, by the adjutant of his regiment, he at first seemed much struck, but recollecting himself immediately, he said with composure:

"I have long expected this misfortune:
"but I shall always regret that I did not
"see and converse with my dear general
"Ziethen, that worthy and deserving
"man, before his death: His regiment
"will find his loss irreparable.

"For my part, I lose a father and a
"friend, but my successors* will take
"care that his memory does not perish in

* General Ziethen had a statue erected to his memory.

"the

“ the country, for the honour of which
“ he has fought with so much bravery
“ and glory.”

GENERAL Lestewiz signalized himself on various occasions as a man of courage, skill, and zeal for the service of his king. In the battle at Torgau, he collected from the remains of several regiments which had been nearly cut to pieces, five or six hundred men; and with these troops he attacked the Siptiz hills, upon which the enemy was posted, with such bravery and success as to dislodge them; and as general Ziethen, without knowing of the attack of Lestewiz, had attempted the same from another side, the Prussian troops became masters of this advantageous post, and by that means obtained a compleat victory. The king of Prussia rewarded the services of this brave officer, by promoting him by degrees from the rank of major, which he then held, to that of major general; he made him also commander of Potsdam.

After

After the peace in 1763, he made him a present of landed estates (which had fallen to the crown by the death of the Margrave Charles) to the amount of 200,000 dollars. This deed of gift was accompanied by the following letter, in the king's own hand:

" My dear colonel Lestewiz,

" I have not forgotten the important services you have done me in the last war, and I have long wished for an opportunity of rewarding them. 'Till now, it has been out of my power.—I inclose you a deed of gift of certain estates which you have only to take possession of, &c.

FREDERIC."

AT the same time, general Prittwiz was presented by the king with estates of the value of 300,000 dollars. In the battle of Cunersdorf, the king had his horse killed under him. Prittwiz immediately dismounted, gave him his, and with a handful

ful of men, routed a large body of cossacks, who were upon the point of taking the king prisoner.—The king once said: “Lestewiz saved the state, and Prittwez the king.”*

AT

* The king provided as far as his finances would permit, for every old and deserving officer in his army, who was so fortunate as to have his good opinion. But it sometimes happened that a well or ill-grounded prejudice which he had conceived, and to which he commonly obstinately adhered, deprived an officer of the reward his long services had deserved. In regard to the privates and subaltern officers of his army, their number was so exceedingly great, that to have provided for them all was next to an impossibility. The monarch however, wished to do it, and he ordered that an old soldier should have the preference to any other candidate in supplying all vacant places which they might be fit for; such as excise officers, constables, watchmen, beadles, &c. &c. But still numbers found themselves, after having served all their lives in the king's army with zeal and fidelity, and after having sacrificed their health and limbs in defence of their country, reduced to poverty and distress; and as the complaints of the neglected are always more loudly, and more frequently heard, than the thanks of the relieved, this grievance was very heavily complained of throughout the king's dominions.

In

AT a review in Prussia, a captain in the regiment of ———, a very deserving officer, asked the king's leave to sell a very fine estate, as it was out of his power to keep it from decay, and as there was beside a mortgage of 24,000 dollars upon it, which he was unable to discharge. The king upon his return to Potsdam, sent the officer 24,000 dollars in money to pay his debts, and 6000 dollars for the improvement of his estate.

THE King had a particular regard for the brave colonel Troschke. Upon the news of his death, he ordered a letter to

In Berlin, the king has erected an hospital for such invalids, as are so crippled as to be totally incapable of doing any work. Besides this, a certain limited number of invalids, who are still able to earn something, are, upon the recommendation of their officer, (provided there is a vacancy) allowed one dollar, (about 3s. 4d.) per month. This will in England appear a very scanty allowance, but in the Prussian dominions, where every necessary of life is so much cheaper, it will go very far towards the support of a poor man, who has no incumbrance.

be

be written to his widow, in which he expresses the grief he felt upon losing so brave an officer; he promises to protect her and her family, and wishes to know if her domestic circumstances require his immediate assistance. To this letter which was written by a secretary, he added the following lines himself:

“ I honoured your late husband, as a *specimen* of an excellent officer; but as he, alas! is dead, I will be a father to his children; and shew those favours which I intended for him, to them and to their mother. Send me an exact statement of your circumstances, and I promise to contrive matters so, that the family shall be satisfied.

Potsdam,
Jan. 21st. 1786.

FREDERIC.”

To the same.

“ I was glad to receive by your letter of yesterday, an exact account of your domestic concerns; after the loss of my brave colonel von Troschke. I shall now endeavour

deavour to give you convincing proofs of my favour and protection. I have ordered his salary as governor of Karzig, in Newmark, amounting to 500 dollars per annum, to be continued to you, as a provision for yourself and for the education of your children; and I shall take measures that the value of your estate shall between this and Midsummer, be encreased to the sum of at least 20,000 dollars. This will be to you and your family an indelible proof of the favour of your gracious king.

FREDERIC.

The king not only fulfilled his promise, in regard to the encreased value of the family estate, but likewise provided for the daughters of the deceased colonel in the protestant convents* in Westphalia.

A

* After the famous war of thirty years, many monasteries and nunneries fell into the hands of the protestants. Most of these were continued, but with a total alteration of their principle. They have been mostly converted into houses for the reception, provision,

M

and

A colonel in the king's suit had a large family of children; and found that his pay and family fortune were not sufficient to support the necessary expence attending his situation, but that he was under the necessity of incurring debts. His debts were already increased to the sum of 2000 dollars, and he saw no probability of discharging, or preventing them from increasing. He grew melancholy, the king

and partly education of the daughters of protestant noblemen. The secular regulations of these houses are nearly the same, as when they were in the hands of the Romish church. The inhabitants are under the direction of an abbess, and attend divine service at certain stated hours of the day. In these protestant convents, ladies may, if they chuse, remain all their lives; but they are at liberty to quit them whenever they please, and to marry without restraint, in which case they are entitled to a dower out of the revenues of the convent.

In regard to the admission of none but daughters of noblemen, the rules of most of these houses are uncommonly rigid. They require a certain considerable number of ancestors to be produced and proved, none of whom must ever have degraded the *high-born* blood of the family by intermarriages with persons who were ignoble.

observed

observed it, and sent for him: "Sir," said he, "you always look chagrined: what is the matter with you? Tell me frankly: friends should communicate their grief to one another." Before the colonel could answer this unexpected question, the king continued: "I have heard that you are in debt to the amount of 2000 dollars." He then turned to a table which stood by him, and took from it 2000 dollars in Frederic d'ors,* gave them to the officer and said: "Here is money to pay your debts." He then gave him 2000 dollars more: "And here," said he, "is money, with which you must contrive things so, as to contract no debts in future."

THE widow of a brave officer wrote to the king, and represented to him: "that she was old, and ill of the gout in her hands, a disorder which the king knew by experience to be very painful; that she

* A Frederic's d'or is about 16s. 8d.

had two daughters, who notwithstanding their ill health, were obliged to support themselves and their mother by the labour of their hands, which they could not do much longer. Should death deprive her of the assistance of either of them, she must inevitably perish for hunger." The king wrote her in answer, the following letter:

" My dear Madam,

" I am extremely grieved at the melancholy circumstances of poverty, distress and sickness, in which you are involved. Why did you not apply to me long ago? At present, I have no vacant pension* at my disposal, but I *must* assist you for the sake of that brave officer, your late husband.

I shall therefore order one dish less every day to be brought to my table. This, I calculate, will save me a sum of

* Pension means here a place in a protestant convent, for the daughters of the lady. See note, page 161.

365 dollars*, and the payment of this small annual stipend shall commence with the beginning of next month. You must at present be satisfied with it, till I have a vacant pension to give you, &c. &c.

FREDERIC."

AN old serjeant in the regiment von Braun, a very brave and deserving man, had been promised a place as a reward for his services, but he was put off from time to time, and could not get provided for. He resolved therefore to write to the king, and represent to him his distress. In his petition he informed the king, that there was a vacancy in the salt revenue, which he might have, if he could give security to the amount of 2000 dollars, but this was entirely out of his power. The king sent his letter, with an order for the veteran's appointment to his minister of

* About sixty-one pounds, a considerable sum in a cheap country.

late Baron von Werder, and added the following lines:

“ You should not turn away my
“ old invalids. You have been
“ a soldier yourself. I am still
“ a soldier, and am always glad
“ to see my old comrades pro-
“ vided for.

FREDERIC.”

AN old man, of the name of Heimb-
burger, who had served as serjeant in the
regiment the late king commanded as
prince of Prussia, but had been discharged
as an invalid forty years, was provided for
by being put into an easy place in the ex-
cise revenue. But at last age and infir-
mities encreased so upon him, that he
was incapable of doing any duty. His
place was supplied by another, and his
salary still continued to him. But it was
at different times so diminished, that he
began to feel all the misery and distress
arising

arising from the struggles of age with poverty. At last he became so weak that he could not stir; all his petitions and remonstrances at the excise office were disregarded, and he resolved to apply to the king himself. This he did in a petition he got drawn up, in which he at first gave some account of himself, and of his past services, and then requested that his majesty would graciously be pleased to grant him a small allowance, sufficient to enable him to live the few years he had left without the dreadful apprehensions of starving. The king upon reading the petition of the old man, was so moved, that he immediately gave orders, that the whole of his former salary should be restored to him, and that he should besides receive annually, a stipend of 100 dollars from the king's private purse. The king had added the following to the order sent for this purpose to the excise office:

“Is the old man still alive? I remember him perfectly well; he shall have annually 100 dollars more than his

“ former salary, and the money shall be
“ brought him, to his lodgings.”

A POLISH nobleman of a very ancient family, requested the king by letter, to give him a commission in a regiment, quartered in Silesia. The king granted his request, and directed him to apply to the commanding officer, who had received orders in his favour. The nobleman was so over-joyed at this news, that he immediately set off for Potsdam, and requested an audience of the king, in order to return him his thanks for the favour conferred upon him. He was immediately admitted, but the king was not a little astonished, to see an elderly man surrounded by a large family of children enter the room. “ My friend,” said the king, “ you did not inform me that you were old and infirm, nor that you had so numerous a family. It is evident that you cannot possibly support them by your pay as an officer. But in the mean

“ mean time, as I have given you my
 “ promise, I mean to perform it. You
 “ shall during your life receive your pay :
 “ your sons shall immediately be provided
 “ for among my cadets, and there receive
 “ an education, which shall qualify them
 “ to be one day useful in my army. And
 “ as your age will prevent you from tak-
 “ ing an active part in your regiment, I
 “ will give orders that you shall be pro-
 “ vided for in a manner, that will enable
 “ you to spend the remainder of your days
 “ in peace and quiet.”

The feelings of the old man were too
 powerful to be expressed in words: his
 children clasped the knees of the king,
 and their tears, more than their words,
 testified their gratitude.

IN the last short war, occasioned by
 the disputed Bavarian succession, the king
 had his head quarters at Frankenstein, in
 Upper Silesia. He lodged at the house of
 an old widow, who shewed him into her
 best

best apartment. In this room hung the portraits of her six sons, all of whom had lost their lives in the second Silesian war. The king viewed them all with emotion, and at last stopped at one of the portraits, looked at it attentively, and said: "Had this brave officer lived he would now have been one of my generals." He then enquired into the circumstances of the family, and hearing that the lady had still two daughters unprovided for, he made her a present of 6000 ducats.*

THE following anecdote shews that Frederic II. was not hardened against the calamities of war, nor loved the scenes of carnage necessarily attending it.

Count Seckendorf came to Berlin to request the assistance of the King of Prussia, against the numerous enemies of the unfortunate emperor, Charles VII. But the king turned a deaf ear to all his promises and entreaties. He shewed him upon the

* About £2930.

parade, a regiment which had considerably suffered in the first Silesian war, with these words: "See here the consequences of war: this regiment has lost above half its men, and would you have me lead my subjects again into the danger of being cut to pieces in so dreadful a manner?"

IN a district in West Prussia, a dreadful storm of rain had done great mischief to a whole district. The inhabitants represented their distress to the king, and he sent them the following answer:

"I have heard of your misfortune.
 "It comes from the hand of God. But
 "my treasury shall make good the damage to the utmost farthing, and I
 "will send you an honest and able man,
 "who shall examine into your losses,
 "and repay you.

"I am your gracious king,

FREDERIC."

THE

THE king once rang the bell in his cabinet; but as nobody answered, he opened the door of the antichamber, and found his page fast asleep upon a chair. He went up to wake him; but coming nearer, he observed a paper in his pocket upon which something was written. This excited his curiosity; he pulled it out; and found that it was a letter from the page's mother, the contents of which were nearly as follows: "She returned her son many thanks for the money he had saved out of his salary, and had sent her, which had proved a very timely assistance. God would certainly reward him for it; and if he continued to serve God and his king faithfully and conscientiously, he could not fail of success and prosperity in this world." Upon reading this, the king slept softly into his closet, fetched a rouleau of ducats, and put it, with the letter, into the page's pocket. He then rang so long, till the page awoke, and came into the closet. "You have been asleep, I suppose," said the
the

the king. The page could not deny it; stammered out an excuse; put, in his embarrassment, his hand into his pocket, and felt the rouleau of ducats. He immediately pulled it out, turned pale, and looked at the king with tears in his eyes. "What's the matter with you?" said the king. "Oh! replied the page, somebody has contrived my ruin; I know nothing of this money." "*What God bestows,*" returned the king, "*he bestows in sleep**. Send the money to your mother; give my respects to her, and inform her, that I will take care both of her and you."

AS the king once spent the winter in Berlin, he observed, that in the window of a garret opposite to the palace, a light was burning very early every morning, and very late in the evening. He enquired who lived there? and was informed, that the garret was inhabited by a poor

* A German proverb.

cobler,

cobler, who worked early and late. He immediately sent for the man, and asked him what made him so uncommonly industrious? "I have, please your majesty," said the cobbler, "many children; and with all my industry I can hardly make all ends meet, so as to support them. Besides this, I have a score standing at my leather-seller's, and please your majesty; and am in danger of an action at law for the debt." The king was touched with his distress; praised the honest industry of the cobbler; and gave him several hundred dollars.

THE king once ordered an extract from the revenue-accounts of a certain province, to be laid before him. The director of the court of revenue, who had been formerly an officer, and was a precise and choleric man, ordered the eldest clerk to extract immediately the required accounts in his presence.

While the extract was making, the director hurried the clerk in such a manner, that

that when it was finished, he by mistake laid hold of the ink-stand, instead of the sand-box, and almost entirely obliterated the account. This put the director into such a passion, that he could scarce refrain from striking the clerk; and without waiting for his defence, he ordered him to go to the king directly, and answer for himself. The king was immediately informed of the misfortune of the clerk, (who waited in the antichamber) by the enraged director. "It is of no consequence," replied the king; "who knows how you may have hurried the poor man, and that was not my meaning. Let him come in." The clerk was introduced, and the king continued; "My friend, I see you write, considering your age, a very good hand. You have been much hurried with this account. Here, I see, is a surplus at the bottom, of 200 dollars, which shall be added to your annual salary. Copy it again; take your own time; and let nobody frighten you."

THE excise office had condemned a soldier who was convicted of smuggling, to the payment of a fine of 2000 dollars. The sentence was as usual sent to the king for confirmation: but he returned it, with this query written in the margin:

“Before I can confirm the above sentence, I am very curious to know, what measures are intended to be taken, to oblige a common soldier to pay a fine of 2000 dollars?”

THE king of Prussia made it a point to return every mark of respect or civility shewn him in the street by those who met him. He one day observed at table, that whenever he rode through the streets of Berlin, his hat was always in his hand. Baron Pöllnitz, who was present, said, “That his majesty had no occasion to notice the civility of every one who pulled his hat off to him in the street.” “And why not?” answered the king in a lively

lively tone, "are they not all human
" beings as well as myself?"

THE following conversation of the late king of Prussia with several of his officers, may perhaps not be uninteresting. It was taken down by one of the farmers-general of the king's domains, M. Fromme, to whom it was chiefly directed and communicated to the editor of German anecdotes, by his near relation M. Gleim. Besides this respectable authority, it has strong internal evidence of authenticity, and may throw light upon some features of the character of Frederic the Second. I have endeavoured to retain what could be interesting to an English reader, and have given only the substance of the less entertaining dialogue, which in German is regularly carried on by question and answer.

The king had, at his own expence, drained the large and formerly useless bog *
of

* This bog, which had lain waste from time immemorial, was supposed to be irrecoverable. It lies

of Rhienluch, situate near the river Dosse, rendered the ground arable, and provided habitations for 308 families. On July 23, 1779, his majesty resolved to pay a visit to this newly acquired territory.—He set off at five o'clock in the morning from Potsdam, and came at eight o'clock to Seelenhorst, and it was now my turn to ride with his majesty*. In the carriage with the king sat general Count von Görtz. During the time that the horses were changed, his majesty conversed with the officers of the Ziethen regiment of hussars, who were quartered in the neighbouring villages, and took no notice of

in Brandenburg, and is part of the king's domains. The late king resolved, if possible, to recover so large a tract of land, and after many years perseverance, and enormous sums expended, he succeeded; so that it is now a very fruitful and well inhabited country.

* Whenever the king travelled, he was accompanied by the lord, or chief magistrate of the district he passed through. Farmer-general Fromme, who wrote the above, farmed a large district of the domain rendered habitable by the draining of the bog, and it was his duty to accompany the king through that part which was subject to his jurisdiction,

me.

me. The road was upon a bank, and too narrow to admit of my riding by the side of the carriage. At Dechau the king met captain von Ziethen, who is lord of Dechau, and kept him by the carriage till he came to the end of the district, where horses were again changed. Captain von Rathenow, an old favourite of the king, was there with his whole family, and the captain stepped up to the carriage.

Captain von Rathenow. Your majesty's most humble servant.

The King. Who are you, Sir?

Rath. I am captain von Rathenow from Karvensee.

The King. (*Folding his hands.*) Good God! my dear Rathenow! are you still alive? I thought you were long since dead. How do you do? are you in good health?

Rath. O yes, sire!

King. But, good God, how fat you are grown!

Rath. Yes, sire, I have still a good appetite; but my legs begin to fail me.

King. That is just the case with me. Are you married?

(The king then very graciously enquired after his lady and her family; conversed with her for a few minutes; and bid his old friend adieu. —The road then led us to Fehrbellin; and the ranger * of the royal forest, Mr. Brand, rode with the king. Upon the road we came to some sand-land, and the king called to Mr. Brand).

Mr. Ranger! why are these sand-lands uncultivated?

Brand. They do not belong to the royal forests; they are part of the open country. Corn is sown in some of them: on our right hand firs have been sown.

King. Who has sown the firs?

Brand. Your majesty's farmer-general, who is here.

King, (to me.) Na! tell my privy

* This is not a sinecure place, but requires the strictest attention to the state of the royal forests, which by the sale of fuel, timber, and game, produce a considerable revenue.

counsellor

counsellor Michaelis *, that it is my pleasure that the sand-land be sown. (*To the Ranger*) But do you know how firs are sown?

Brand. O yes, sire.

King. Na! how are they sown, from the west to the east, or from the east to the west?

Brand. From the west to the east.

King. Right; but do you know why?

Brand. Because we have most high winds from the west.

King. You are right.

(At Fehrbellin horses were again changed; and as his majesty passed the drains, which I had made in the bog at the king's expence, I rode up to the carriage, and said:)

These, sire, are two drains, which have been made by your majesty's favour, and which keep the bog dry.

King. So! So! I am glad of it. But who are you, Sir?

* The minister to whose department the controul of that country belonged.

Fromme. I am the farmer of the district of Fehrbellin.

King. What is your name?

Fromme. Fromme.

King. Ho! ho! you are a son of the provincial counsellor Fromme.

From. Please your majesty, my father was counsellor of domains at Lähnin.

King. Counsellor of domains? counsellor of domains? that cannot be true. Your father was provincial counsellor; I knew him very well. Tell me, has the draining of the bog been of any great use?

From. Very great, indeed, sire.

King. Do you keep more cattle than formerly?

(The king then enquired into the state of the breed of cattle upon the bog, and advised stone-salt against the epidemical disorder of the cattle.)

Fromme. Kitchen salt, sire, answers the same purpose.

King. Don't you believe it. But you must not break the stone salt, but give it to the cattle in large lumps to lick at.

Fromme.

Fromme. It shall be done.

King. May any other improvements be made in the country?

Fromme. Yes, sire! here lies the lake of Kemen. If this were drained, your majesty would obtain 1800 acres of meadow-land; the whole country would have the benefit of a navigation; and the towns of Fehrbellin and Ruppın would reap immense advantages from it. Many goods might be by this means brought from Mecklenburg to Berlin by water.

King. I believe it. You, indeed, would be much benefited by it, but many would be ruined; especially the owners of the ground through which the canal would pass*. Is not this the case?

From. The land through which it would pass belongs to the royal forests, and bears nothing but birch wood.

* I suppose the king means, by making them liable to inundations, which are almost unavoidable in that country wherever it stands in water, owing to the great snows and sudden thaws they are subject to in winter, and to their low situation.

King. Well ; if nothing but birch stands upon it, it may be done. But take care you do not reckon without your host, and the expence be not greater than the advantages gained.

From. The expence will certainly not exceed the advantages your majesty will gain. First, 1800 acres of land will infallibly be recovered from the lake, upon which thirty-six families can be settled, allowing fifty acres for each ; and a small tax upon the floats of wood and vessels passing upon the canal, will more than pay the interest of the money expended.

King. Na ! apply then to my privy counsellor Michaelis, he understands these matters. I advise you to apply to him in all your concerns of this kind, and whenever you think a new colony may be established. I do not mean large colonies at once ; but whenever you think you can settle a family or two, *apply to the man.*

From. We will, sire.

(The king then enquired from recollection, after several places in the neighbourhood, and wished to know, whether

whether general Ziethen was at home ; whether the draining of the bog had been of any advantage to him ; and expressed great pleasure upon hearing that he had considerably won by it. He then enquired after the present farmer at Old Ruppin, and how long he had been there.)

From. His name is Honig ; he came at Midsummer.

King. At Midsummer ; what was he before ?

From. One of the canons of the cathedral.

King. A canon ! A canon ! How did the devil manage to make a farmer-general of a canon ?

From. He was a young man who had money, and who was ambitious to serve your majesty as farmer of your domains.

King. What became of his predecessor ?

From. He died.

King. Why did not his wife keep on the farm ?

From. She became very poor.

King.

King. Ah! by female management!

From. I humbly beg your majesty's pardon. She managed very well, but was ruined by misfortunes, which might have ruined the best farmer.—My own cattle likewise perished about four years ago and I could get nothing remitted on that account in my annual payments, and since then, I have not been able to recover myself.

King. My son! I have to-day a cold in my left ear. I cannot hear well.

From. And it is a great misfortune that your majesty's privy counsellor Michaelis, has the same cold in his ear, and cannot hear neither.*

(After having said this I fell back a little way from the carriage, being apprehensive his majesty might be displeased with what I had said.)

King. Na! farmer, come forward.—Keep to the carriage, but take care you

* Mr. Fromme had applied in vain to Michaelis for an abatement in his rent, in consideration of his misfortune with his cattle.

get no hurt. Speak loud, I shall understand you.

(The king then enquired after several neighbouring places, and insisted that one of them belonged to the cathedral at Magdeburg, and not at Berlin. The farmer persisted in the contrary opinion, and said at last)

From. I should ill deserve to farm your majesty's domains, if I could not tell what lords have possessions in the villages under me.

King. Well then, you are in the right. Tell me; there must be an estate in this neighbourhood, the name of which I have forgotten. Tell me the name of all the villages hereabouts.

(The king then remembered the name to be Karbe; recollected the owner's name;—seemed by his enquiries perfectly acquainted with the situation of the neighbouring villages, roads and hills, and informed the farmer, that he had not been in the country for the space of thirty-six years.—Now follows a long conversation.

sation, consisting chiefly of enquiries into the names of the neighbouring villages and of their owners, which exhibits a wonderful instance of the king's recollection of the country and its inhabitants after so long an absence. He was among other things informed, that a certain M. von Kleist was in possession of Protzen, that he had been in the army, but had taken his discharge, and the king wished to know the reason ;)

From. I do not know, sir.

King. You may tell me without scruple. I mean nothing by the question. Why did the man take his discharge ?

From. I am really ignorant of his reasons.

(We now came to Protzen, and I observed that old general Ziethen stood in the court of the manor house. When his majesty heard this, he ordered the carriage to stop and got out. He seemed extremely rejoiced to see the old general : spoke with him and M. von Kleist upon various subjects: enquired

enquired whether the draining of the bog had been of any advantage to them; whether their cattle had suffered by the epidemical disorder; and recommended stone-salt as a preservative against it. Suddenly his majesty turned about, and asked me in a whisper, Who is that fat gentleman in a white coat? I told him it was the provincial counsellor von Quast. The king then continued his conversation with general Ziethen and von Kleist. Suddenly he turned about and said:

Your servant, counsellor von Quast.

(Mr. von Quast then approached his majesty, but he called out to him:)

Stay where you are, sir, I know you; you are counsellor von Quast.

(The horses were now put to the carriage; the king took a very affectionate leave of old general Ziethen, bowed to the rest, and drove on. He then desired me to keep by the carriage, and asked me again if I really could not tell why M. von Kleist of

Protzen, had taken his discharge. I assured him I could not. He then enquired how the harvest had turned out, and after some conversation upon the subject, he asked me again why M. von Kleist had taken his discharge. I supposed he might perhaps, have been obliged to take the management of his father's estates upon him, but could not tell the true reason.

King. What is the name of that village?

From. Gartz.

King. Whom does it belong to?

From. To the counsellor of war, M. von Quast.

King. To whom, do you say?

From. To the counsellor of war, M. von Quast.

King. Poh! I'll hear of no counsellor of war,* who does the estate belong to?

From.

* The German titles derived from Rath, (counsellor) are innumerable, and their meaning is commonly totally inapplicable to the employment in which the

From. Mr. von Quast.

King. Na! that's rightly answered.

(We then came to Nacheln, where we changed horses, and drove on. His majesty asked after most of the villages in the neighbourhood, enquired into the produce of the country and the mode of tillage. He asked likewise why we did not cultivate hemp and woad?

From. The soil is not fit for it.

the person who bears them is engaged. Here are a few of them as a specimen.

Amsts	-	-	} R A T H. }	Farms (of Domains)
Cabinets	-	-		Cabinet
Comissions	-	-		Commission
Departements	-	-		District
Domainen	-	-		Domains
Finanz	-	-		Finance
Justiz	-	-		Justice
Geheimer	-	-		Privy
Würclicher Geheimer	-	-		Real Privy
Hof	-	-		Court
Krieges	-	-		War
Kammer	-	-		Court (of Revenue)
Land	-	-		Province
Regierungs	-	-		Government
Waisen	-	-		Orphans

King.

King. So you say—but you should have tried it.

From. I have tried it, sire, but did not succeed, and as a farmer, I cannot make many experiments, for if they miscarry, I must still pay my rent.

King. What do you cultivate, where you formerly grew woad?

From. Wheat.

King. Well, keep to your wheat.—Your subjects seem to be in very good circumstances.

From. Yes, sire, I can prove by the provincial registries that they are worth a capital of 50,000 dollars.

King. I like that.

From. Eleven years ago died a peasant, who possessed 11,000 dollars in the provincial bank.

King. You must take care to keep them in these good circumstances.

From. It is certainly well that the subjects are rich; but it makes them insolent, as is the case here. They have complained of me to your majesty seven different times,

times, in order to get rid of their services*.

King. I dare say they had reason to do so.

From. I humbly beg your majesty's pardon. The business has been enquired into, and it has been found in every case, that far from having oppressed the subjects, I had merely required from them, what it was their duty to do. But the affair rested there. The peasants are never punished; your majesty always supposes them to be in the right, and the poor Farmer must suffer.

King. My son, I am very ready to believe that you were always found to be in the right. You take care to supply the as-

* Hofedienst. *Germ.* The subjects are obliged to till the ground of their lords, and of the royal domains to which they belong, under certain conditions; formerly they were slaves in the strictest sense. The late king granted them a degree of liberty, which renders the word *slavery* no more applicable to their situation; but an Englishman would hesitate to call them *a free peasantry*. For an account of their particular duties, see the *Annals of Agriculture*, by Arthur Young, esq. for the month of June, 1788.

O

seffor

feſſor of your diſtrict with plenty of butter, capons, and turkeys.

From. An pleaſe your majeſty, we cannot afford to do that. Grain brings us hardly any profit, and if we did not turn theſe other articles into money, how ſhould we pay our rent? * * * *

King. Well! do what you pleaſe with your ſubjects; but by no means oppreſs them.

(We now arrived in a different part of the country, and the king obſerved:)

Hereabouts the inhabitants ſeem to be in wretched circumſtances.

From. Indeed, ſire, they are. They live in the greateſt poverty.

King. I am very, very ſorry for it.—Formerly a provincial counſellor lived here, who had many children, do you remember him?

From. I ſuppoſe your majeſty means M. von Gorgas, of Ganſer.

King. Yes, yes, I mean him. Is he dead?

From. He died, ſire, in the year 1773. It was very ſingular, that within a fortnight,

night, he, his lady, his daughter, and his four sons all died. His four other sons were in your majesty's service, and each of them quartered in a different garrison. But it is remarkable, that they were all ill of the same disorder, (which was a kind of inflammatory fever) at the same time, and recovered with great difficulty.

King. That was a most confounded misfortune.

(M. Fromme then gave an account of the rest of the family. The king then continued his enquiries about the state of agriculture in the bog. Mr. Fromme informed him, among other particulars, that it had been formerly impossible in the dryest season, to get the hay that grew upon the most elevated parts of the bog home, but that they had been obliged to stack it, up and down the bog, and fetch it away when the frost had rendered the ground so firm as to bear a carriage. After the draining of the bog, it had been laid dry in every part, and great part of it was arable.

General Görtz must have informed his majesty, that M. Fromme had formerly dealt in horses, for he continued:

King. I know that you love horses; but I would advise you to transfer your partiality to the cows: You will gain more by breeding cows than horses.

From. I do not deal any more in horses. I breed but few colts every year.

King. Breed calves; that will answer better.

From. But, sire, if proper attention is paid to the breeding of horses, nothing is lost by it. I know a gentleman, who two years ago sold a stallion of his own breeding for 1000 dollars.*

King. The man who paid it was a fool.

From. He was a Mecklenburg nobleman.

King. He was a fool, notwithstanding.

(The king then continued his enquiries into the names of the neighbouring towns and villages, and their situa-

* About 160l. sterling; an immense price for a horse of the breed of that country.

tion.* At last we arrived upon the hills of Ströllen, from which the whole bog and the adjacent country may be overlooked; and the king took his perspective, and having viewed the country exclaimed with warmth:

Well, this is above my expectations!—this is indeed beautiful! I must say this, You, and all who have had a hand in these improvements, are honest men.

(The king then made us all come round round him, and said)

This bog to the right, and that to the left shall be drained and rendered habitable. * * * I then suppose 300 families may be settled there and 500 head of cattle kept.—Am I right?

(To this none ventured to answer. At last I said: “ Perhaps, sire.”

* It would be tedious to follow every question asked by the king and every answer given, where the country is not particularly known. But in all his questions Frederic shewed so much true patriotism, so much recollection of what he had seen thirty-six years before, and so much intimate knowledge of the inferior arts of human life, as is never expected from, and seldom found in a monarch.

King. You may tell me without any scruple. There may be more or less. I know it is impossible to tell exactly at first. I have not been there, and am not acquainted with the ground; or else I could tell as well as any one of you, how many families could be settled there.

Several objections were then made by the gentlemen, grounded upon the rights of common in the bog claimed by the lords of the neighbouring estates. His majesty answered their objections, proposed to purchase their right by an equivalent, ordered them to see the work done, and to draw upon his treasury for the expence. He then dismissed me very graciously, and soon arrived at Rathenow, where he dined with lieutenant colonel von Backhof, from whom I have the following narrative:

The king seemed highly pleased with his journey, and said to lieutenant colonel Backhof, " My dear Backhof, if you have not been lately in the neighbourhood of Fehrbellin, go there by all means. The country is exceedingly improved. I
have

have not made so pleasant a journey this long time. I undertook it because I had no review, and the gratification I have received, will induce me to make similar journies in future."

" Tell me how did you fare in the last war? Probably very ill: You could do nothing in Saxony neither. The reason was, we had to fight against batteries and not against men. I might have probably effected something; but I must have sacrificed half my army, and shed much innocent blood. But had I done that, *I should have deserved to have been tied up in the guard-room, and to have received a sound flogging.* War as carried on now-a-days, is a dreadful thing. I am now as well informed of the battle of Fehrbellin, as if I had been present. When I was prince of Prussia, I was acquainted with an old burgher (the man was very old indeed) who could describe the whole battle, and was perfectly acquainted with the spot. I once got into my carriage and took my old burgher with me, who then shewed me every thing, in a very satisfactory manner.

As I returned home, I thought: Well I must now have some fun with this fellow; and asked him: Father! can you tell me, why the two sovereigns quarrelled? "O dear-a-me, yea," replied the burgher, "that's what a can, th' top and bothom on't. When ahr elector wur a youngster, he larn'd atth' univarsity o' Utrecht, and thear wurth' king of Sweden tew, when he wur prince; and thear ye mun nua, they fratch'd, and wur ohlus at logger-heads: and nah a tell'd yeth' thing as't is."*

UPON a certain occasion in the year 1775, the king conversed with some of his officers upon the fatigues he had undergone in the last war. He recollected particularly a certain night, in which he

* *Delirant reges, plectantur Achivi.*

The King of Prussia pronounced what the old man said in the broad provincial dialect of that country. I have attempted to imitate it, in the Yorkshire dialect. At the time the King of Prussia undertook this journey he was 67 years old, and he was so fatigued by it, that he fell asleep during dinner.

was almost frozen to death ; when a common soldier by lighting a fire with great expedition, procured him relief. " At that time," continued he, " I promised to give the man a trifle, and I do not recollect that I gave him any thing. The great difficulties I was then in entirely drove it from my memory, and I have not thought of it since. I should be glad to know if the man is still alive ?" An officer who was present informed his majesty, that the man was at that moment a sergeant in his regiment. The king was pleased, ordered a considerable sum to be paid him, and gave him the reversion of a good place in the excise revenue.

A short time before the king's death, a good appointment had been given to a subaltern in his army. The warrant was, as usual, laid before the king for his approbation and signature : but instead of signing it, he drew under it, a man hanging

ing upon a gallows; having recollected some particular occurrence, in which he had behaved improperly, and rendered himself unworthy of promotion.

AT a review in Prussia, a woman requested the king to grant her son, who was a private in the guards at Potsdam, leave of absence, that he might have an opportunity of visiting her. The king did not comply with her request, but upon his return to Potsdam, he informed the soldier that his mother was in good health, and desired to be affectionately remembered to him. The following year the king was again in Prussia, and the woman came again to request the same favour. The king knew her immediately, and before she could speak a word, informed her, that her son was well, and would be very glad to see her at Potsdam.

THE king once told general von Rothkirch, that when the Tartars invaded Silesia,

Silesia, they had extirpated his whole family consisting of forty persons; except an infant in the cradle. General von Rothkirch found, that according to the old Silesian historians, the case had really happened, and likewise remembered to have heard an indistinct account of that melancholy catastrophe in his family.

WHEN

WHEN the king was surrounded by the Russians in his camp near Schweidnitz, he ordered the tents to be struck every night, and continued himself all night upon the batteries, waiting the approach of morning. He once sat down upon the bare ground by one of the fires, wrapped up in his great coat, and seemed much fatigued and desirous of sleep. A soldier of the regiment of Wollfersdorf observed it, and pulling off his pouch, offered it to the king for a pillow. The king laid down, and placed his head upon the pouch; but not being able to sleep, he opened his eyes and entered into conversation with the soldier; enquired from what country he came, how long he had been in the service, &c. At last the soldier, emboldened by the king's condescension, ventured

ventured to ask several questions himself, and the following conversation ensued :

Soldier. Now, supposing your majesty were taken prisoner, how could you be ransomed, considering that you are a king?

King. As a general, not otherwise.

Soldier. Hum ! I can't think that ; you are more than a general.

King. No, indeed, I am not. In my army, my rank is that of a general.

The Soldier shook his head, and said, But they would get some valuable booty, were they to take your majesty prisoner.

King. Upon my word they would not. I have not a penny about me.

Soldier. Your majesty must not think to persuade me of that. Shall I believe that you are entirely without money?

King. But I tell you, I am : I am not worth a farthing (turning his pockets out.) There, you see it is as I said.

Soldier. That is indeed extraordinary. But ——— you have there a beautiful ring, and I dare say of very considerable value.

The

The King pulled off his ring, and shewed it to the soldier. Well! what do you think it is worth? guefs.

Soldier. I fancy the ring may be worth some 10,000 dollars, or so!

King. Oh you blockhead! I'll sell you this ring for 500, and be a gainer by the bargain.

Soldier. That I shall never believe. That's certainly not true.

King. Most undoubtedly it is. I will shew you now its whole value. These small stones may perhaps be worth 300 dollars. The large stone in the middle is a topaz, worth at most thirty dollars; and besides the setting, which cost a trifle, there is nothing of value in the whole ring.

Soldier. Upon my honour, I should not have thought it.

The morning now began to break, and an adjutant came to make his report. The king rose, ordered him to give the soldier a Frederic's d'or*, and said, There, you see that I have no money.

* About 18s.

IN the second Silesian war, the king was once in one of the advanced posts, and was so fatigued, that he expressed a wish to sleep. One of the soldiers, who was upon guard, got some straw, and having spread it, wrapped up the king in his great coat, who then laid down and slept as soundly, as if it had been a bed of down. Soon afterwards the guard was changed; and one of the soldiers, who supposed him to be only an officer, pulled one handful of straw after the other from under him, in order to make a bed for himself. At last he did this so roughly, that the king awoke, and said, "Upon my word, you will soon have taken all my straw from under me." The soldier immediately knew the king, was terribly frightened, and, in order to mend his fault, endeavoured hastily to replace the straw. "Never mind it," said the king, "keep what you have got."

IN

IN the battle of Torgau, the king commanded the left wing of his army, and began the attack upon that part of the Austrian forces, which were very advantageously posted upon the hills of Sip-tiz. By the united bravery of general Ziethen and Lestewiz, this post was towards evening forced, and the day decided in favour of the Prussian army. The following night was extremely cold, and the soldiers had lighted fires in different parts of the camp. Towards morning, the king quitted the left wing, and rode along the front of the army towards the right. When he arrived at his regiment of guards he alighted, and went and placed himself by the fire, surrounded by his brave officers and grenadiers. Here he proposed to await the dawn, and to attack the enemy again in the morning, if they should not have retired, which, on account of the darkness of the night, could not be ascertained. In the mean time, he entered into conversation with the common soldiers, extolled the bravery they

they had shewn during the action; and encouraged them to fight as they had hitherto done. The grenadiers pressed nearer and nearer upon him; and at last one of them, by name Rebiak, with whom the king often spoke, and to whom he still oftener gave money, ventured to ask him, "Where he had been during the battle? Formerly," continued the grenadier, "we were accustomed to see you at our head, leading us into the hottest of the battle; but this time we did not set eyes upon you, and it is not right in you to forsake us." The king then informed him with the greatest condescension, that he had commanded the left wing of the army, which had been the reason why he had not appeared at the head of his own regiment. In the mean time, the king had unbuttoned his blue great coat, and the grenadier observing that a musket ball fell from his cloaths, and that the bullet had perforated both his uniform and his furtout, he cried with enthusiasm, "You are still our old Fritz. You still share every danger with us. With pleasure

sure we will sacrifice our lives for you :” and the whole guard joined him in exclaiming, Long live the king ! Long live the king ! Another grenadier said, Now, Fritz, we hope you will provide us comfortable winter-quarters. “ The devil you do,” said Frederic ; “ first let us take Dresden, “ and then I will provide for you in a “ manner, that will, I think, satisfy you.” The old grenadiers, who crowded close round him, smoked, in short musty pipes, the most wretched tobacco into the king’s face. One of them, who knew the king’s utter aversion to the smoke of tobacco, called out to the rest, Get back there, with your cursed tobacco. “ No, no,” said the king, “ let them stand ; I don’t “ dislike the smell of it.”

DURING the many disagreeable and fatiguing marches the king was obliged to undertake with his army, which sometimes happened in the midst of winter, and in the most terrible weather, he did every thing in his power to keep the common

mon soldiers in spirits and good humour. He therefore rode amongst them step by step, and conversed with such as he knew personally. After a very disagreeable march the day before, the army was once obliged to break up very early in the morning, in a dreadful storm of rain and snow. It was not difficult to observe, that the soldiers did not follow him with the same alacrity and willingness as before. Their looks, and the profound silence which reigned among the troops, testified the contrary. The king, who saw this with great uneasiness, rode in the midst of them without saying a word; but he at last turned about, and called to his soldiers: "March! march! my lads! if we were devils we might sit and enjoy ourselves by a warm fire; but we are soldiers, and therefore march! march!"

UPON a forced march in the second Silesian war, the king rode at the flank of a troop of horse, and heard one of the

men in a distant part of the troop curse and swear in a most dreadful manner. He then rode nearer, and heard the soldier, with the most shocking oaths and imprecations say, "that he wished this d——d life had one day or other an end." "You are right, my son," cried the king, "so do I;—but what is to be done? we must wait patiently till peace can be made."

DURING the attack upon the hills of Burkersdorf in the year 1762, the king met a musketeer who was wounded. "How do we fare?" said the king. "We fare well enough, thank God, replied the soldier; the enemy is put to flight, and we have conquered." "But you, my son, are wounded," said the king, and gave him his handkerchief; "take this, and bind up your wound."—— Czernichef, who rode by the king's side, could not help exclaiming, "Now I am no more surprized at the zeal and enthusiasm with which your troops serve you, since you treat the common soldiers with

with so much kindness and condescension."

IN the year 1759, the king and his army were in so critical a situation, that for several nights he did not get any sleep. At last he was so fatigued, that he could no longer resist the calls of nature; and an officer, who perceived it, made an arrangement that he should not be disturbed by the guards posted round his tent. The king observed that something unusual was going forward, and enquired what it was. The officer told him. The king then called him into his tent, and asked him if he had eaten any thing? (for he knew that there was the utmost scarcity of provisions in his army.) The officer answered, "Yes;" but by his looks, and the shrugging of his shoulders, it was evident that he had not. The king then took a wine bottle; and having held it to the light to see how much might be left in it, he poured a small glass half full, drank it himself, filled the glass with the

P 3 remainder,

remainder, and gave it to the officer with these words, " This is all I have."

DURING the siege of Olmüz, in the year 1758, the enemy surprized and took at Domstädtel, a supply of ammunition and artillery, which was on the road from Silesia to the army. Upon receiving the news of this unexpected misfortune, the king ordered all the commanding officers of regiments and battalions, to attend him in his head-quarters at Schmirfiz. When they were assembled before the house in which the king was quartered, he came to the door; called all his officers around him; and spoke to them as follows:

" Gentlemen! The enemy has found an opportunity of taking away the supplies I expected from Silesia. This unfortunate accident obliges me to raise the siege of Olmüz. But my officers are not, on this account to suppose, that every thing is lost. No! they may be assured, that I will repair this loss in such a manner,

manner, that our enemies will not easily forget it. I therefore now desire of all my officers, that they encourage their men, and not suffer any of them to murmur. I hope that none of my officers will shew the least discontent: for should I perceive the least symptom of dissatisfaction in any one of them, I shall punish it severely. I now intend to break up, and put my troops into motion: I shall march towards the enemy; and wherever I find him, I will fight and beat him, let him be posted as he will, let him be covered by one or more batteries.— But,” continued he (*rubbing his forehead with the head of his cane*) “ I will however never act without consideration and prudence. I am likewise convinced, that all my officers, as well as private soldiers, will do their duty, as men of courage and skill, as they hitherto have done.”

THE day before the bloody, but decisive battle at Leuthen, in which the Austrian army, commanded by Charles,

P 4

prince

prince of Lothringia, was very superior in number to the Prussian forces, the king ordered all his officers to attend him, and held the following speech to them :

“ Gentlemen! I intend to march against the enemy to-morrow, and to give him battle. As the success of the whole campaign depends entirely upon the event of this battle, and as it will decide who is to be the future master of Silesia, I have ordered you to attend me, in order to tell you, that I expect every one of you to do his duty in the strictest manner, and to exert himself to the utmost of his power.

“ I desire that every one of you, in his particular post, attend to the word of command; and lead on his troops with undaunted courage and bravery; in short, that every one approach the enemy with the fixed resolution to conquer or to die. If all of you, without exception, are of my mind, I am sure of victory.

“ I am perfectly well informed where the strength, and where the weakness of the enemy lies; and I shall therefore
place

place every corps in a situation in which it will fight with advantage to itself; and it will then only depend upon you, to fight with manly courage, and old Prussian bravery.

“ If any one of you is a coward; if any one is not determined to sacrifice his life for his country, let him step forward, before he make others as cowardly as himself! Let him step forward, and he shall immediately receive his discharge without ceremony or reproach.”

(As the king spoke these words, the tears ran down the cheeks of major-general von Rohr; but the king, who perceived it, embraced him, and said, “ My dear Rohr, I did not “ mean you.” After a short pause, which followed what the king said last, one of the staff-officers said with enthusiasm, in the name of all the rest, “ None, sire, but a scoundrel, will do it. We are all ready to sacrifice our lives for your majesty.” The king then concluded his speech with

with apparent composure and satisfaction, as follows :

“ I see there is none amongst you who does not possess true heroism. But though I am convinced of this, I shall take particular notice whether each of you fulfils his promise, and does his duty faithfully. I shall be in the front, and in the rear : I shall fly from one wing to the other ; no squadron, no company, will escape my strictest attention ; and whoever I then find exerting himself, and doing his duty to the utmost of his power, upon him will I heap honour and favour, and I shall never forget it. But whoever neglects his charge, may go about his business, and never again shew himself before me.”

The glorious victory which crowned the bravery of the Prussians in the battle which ensued, is well known ; and it was followed by the subjection of all Silesia.

AFTER

AFTER the defeat of the king's army at Hochkirch, in the year 1758, the king ordered his general and staff-officers to come into his tent, and he spoke to them as follows:

" You know, gentlemen, that we have been surpris'd and beaten. The darkness of the night was the chief cause of our confusion and defeat. You must now consider where we are at present. We are now in Upper Lusatia. Our estates, our wives, our children, every thing that is dear to us, is close behind us. If we are once more defeated, all this is lost. A battle is unavoidable. For my part, sooner than give way, I will be buried upon the spot with my whole army. I suppose you all to be of the same mind, but if any one of you is differently disposed, let him say so, and he may go home immediately."

Several officers assured the king, in the name of all the rest, that they would to the utmost of their power fulfil their duty, as they had hitherto done. Upon which the king dismissed them with his usual

usual composure and affability of countenance.

After the abovementioned disaster the King of Prussia was informed that the spirits of the soldiers were very much dejected, and that the officers thought there was reason to dread the consequences. The following morning he addressed them at the parade, as follows:

“ We have been surprised by the enemy, as by thieves in the night. I have, notwithstanding, the greatest reason to be satisfied with my troops, and I return them my thanks for their attachment to me. I am particularly obliged to my princes, for the bravery with which they have defended themselves. But I am sorry to hear that it has been privately insinuated among my troops, that my resources were now all exhausted. Whoever thinks so, and is a coward, may have his dismissal upon the spot: and I shall refuse it to none who apply for it.”

There appeared, however, not one in the whole army to claim this title, hitherto unknown among Prussian soldiers, and

the troops were, by the words and example of the king, inspired with new courage.

BEFORE the battle of Rosbach, the united French and Imperial armies consisted together of 50,000 men. The king of Prussia led into the field against this superior force, only 22,000 horse and foot. Before this memorable battle his majesty addressed his troops as follows :

“ The hour is now come, my friends, in which every thing that is, or ought to be dear to us depends upon our arms and our conduct. Time allows me to say but little, and many words are unnecessary. You all know that you have suffered no fatigue, no hunger, no cold, no watching, no danger, that I have not shared with you, and you now see me ready to sacrifice my life with you and for you. All I desire of you, is the return of that affection and fidelity, which you may be assured of, on my side. I will now only add, not as an encouragement to you, but
as

as a proof of my gratitude for your past services, that from this hour, to the day you get into winter quarters, your pay shall be doubled.—Now ! fight like brave men, and trust for success in God.”

The effect of this short speech was beyond all description. The acclamations of the whole army testified the emotions they felt, the soldiers were inspired with an heroic enthusiasm, their countenances and actions were full of ardour to fight for a king whom they adored ; and in this state of mind they were led to battle and to victory.

THE king's speech to his old generals, held April 5, 1778, after having finished his reviews, being then upon the point of opening the war occasioned by the disputed Bavarian succession.

“ Gentlemen !

“ I have called you together for reasons that concern us all. Most of you have
served

served the greatest part of your lives with one another, and with me; we are grown greyheaded in the service of our country, and we therefore know best ourselves the dangers, difficulties and glory in which we have shared. I have no doubt, but that all of you as well as myself, abhor the spilling of innocent blood, but the danger with which our country is at present threatened, renders it our duty, and makes it even necessary, that we endeavour by the most effectual and most immediate measures to dispel the storm which seems ready to break over our heads. I rely in my future operations entirely upon your well known zeal for my service, and I shall acknowledge it with gratitude as long as I live. But at the same time I require of you, that you look upon it as your most sacred duty, to shew kindness and mercy to our enemies, and to attend in the strictest manner to the keeping up of a rigid discipline among the troops under your command.

“ I do

“ I do not wish to travel with the pomp of a king. You all know that I find no pleasure in a splendid equipage. But my advanced age, and encreasing infirmities, render me incapable of riding as I have been wont to do in my younger years. I shall therefore be under the necessity of using a post-chaise; but on the day of battle you shall see me on horseback.”

AFTER every arrangement had been made before the battle of Zorndorf, when the Prussian army had left the camp, and advanced towards the enemy, the king conversed, during the march, both with the officers and privates of several regiments. Among others he noticed a serjeant in a battalion of grenadiers, one Beek, a very old man, whose bare head was only covered by his cap, as he had hung his wig upon his pouch. The king rode up to him and observed, that his wrinkled face was full of expression and fire.

“ My

"My good friend," said the king, "I think it is almost time you were otherwise provided for. Have you learnt any thing?"

Serjeant. No, please your majesty, I have learnt nothing, I can neither read nor write, I was taken for a soldier very young, and I am good for nothing but to be shot dead.

King. How long have you been in my service?

Serjeant. Four and forty years. I have still my health bravely, and if the war lasts much longer, it will one day or other be my turn to die. But as for that; I don't care a farthing about it. I am used to the life of a soldier, There is at present but one thing that oppresses my mind a little, and if that was off of it, not a doit would I care for being shot dead on the spot. I would then die with a deal of comfort.

The king heard all this with great attention, and then asked; "Well, and what may this be?"

Serjeant. Please your majesty, I have one only son, a fine lad of his years, as

Q

any

any going. His mother has taught him to read a little, but what of that? I should like him to learn something downright and clever, something better than his father knows. I should like to get him into a good school, and his learning would be of much use to him when he comes into our company. But, lack-a-day, my pay wont let me think on't.

King. Pray, my good friend, where is your son to be found?

The old man told the king the name, and the place of abode of his son. The king rode away, and in a few minutes the battle commenced.

The old man escaped *being shot dead*, and when the courier who carried the news of the victory to Berlin returned, he brought him a letter from his wife, by which he was informed, that her son had been taken from her, and placed in the academy at Berlin, where he was cloathed, fed, and taught at the king's expence.—The old man wept for joy at the news.*

* I have separated this anecdote from the preceeding ones of a similar nature, as, in my opinion it does equal

IN the battle of Torgau, the king was slightly grazed by a musket ball. All his aid du camps being sent with orders to different parts of the army were absent, excepting count Frederic d'Anhalt (now lieutenant general in the Russian service.) The king was at the head of his troops, in the midst of danger. Count d'Anhalt entreated him to retire, in order to have his wound dressed. "No," replied the king, "we must now endeavour to stop the prevailing confusion, and fight for victory, or my life is of no consequence." His personal bravery inspired his troops with new courage, the troops rallied, and obtained a compleat victory.

ANOTHER time one of the king's pages, who was close by him, had his

equal credit to the presence of mind and cool courage of the king, and to his generosity. The approaching danger, the agitation of mind which the uncertainty of success must naturally occasion in the mind of the most collected, the bustle and noise of the battle, did not obliterate in his mind the subject of a conversation with a private soldier.

horse shot dead under him. The page fell, and struck his ribs against the hilt of his sword with such violence, as to bend it entirely crooked. With looks in which were pictured the pain and fear he was in, the page attempted to run off. "Where are you going," cried the king, "take your saddle with you." The page was really obliged to take off the saddle, while the king stood by him, during a hail of shot from the muskets of the enemy.

THE king frequently exposed his life to so imminent danger, that when the entreaties of the common soldiers could not prevail upon him to retire, they sometimes crowded upon him with such violence, as to force him out of the hottest of the battle. Some of them once said to him upon such an occasion: "If we lose your majesty, we are all undone!" "My dear lads," replied the king, "you are certainly right;" and rode back, but in a few minutes he was again in the same danger.

DURING

DURING the siege of Schweidniz, the king once suddenly conceived the idea of being blooded* in the open field. He enquired for a surgeon and one was immediately brought to him. He alighted, sat down upon an eminence, and the operation was performed. The vein had hardly begun to bleed when a bomb fell close to the king, and covered him and the surgeon with earth. The surgeon ran off immediately, and left the monarch sitting. Without betraying the least signs of fear, Frederic immediately called him back, ordered him to bind up the vein, and added some of his usual expressions of displeasure. At last the surgeon returned trembling, and half dead with fear. "You may feel, I suppose," said the king,

* The King of Prussia had made the study of medicine a part of his amusement, and supposed himself possessed of considerably more knowledge in this science than he really had. If any of his friends were ill he commonly gave them his advice, and would prescribe medicines for them, which would perhaps, if they had been taken, have ended their disorder effectually, by putting an end to their lives.

Q3

"where-

“whereabouts your heart is; it is, in
“the right place, I dare to say; come
“and bind up my arm immediately.”

The surgeon having done as he was ordered, the king mounted his horse, and rode off very calmly.

THE king and his small army were once posted in the Newmark, opposite to, and only separated from the immense Russian army, by the narrow bed of a river. As very much depended upon his being precisely acquainted with the strength and position of the enemy, he determined to get the most authentic intelligence; and therefore rode, accompanied by an adjutant, one of his pages, who carried a perspective, and a groom, close to the bank of the river. He then alighted, laid his perspective upon the shoulder of the page, and began to observe the enemy. At a small distance, on the opposite side of the river, the Russians had thrown up a battery; and as soon as they perceived him, they kept up a smart fire upon the place

place where he stood. The balls struck into the ground on all sides of him, and covered his coat, and even his hat, with earth. At last, the adjutant who accompanied him, thought it his duty to apprize the king of his danger; and pulling him gently by the coat, he begged his majesty would not remain in so dangerous a spot, and shewed him the effects of the fire of the enemy upon his cloaths. The king did not answer him for some minutes; but he at last turned his head, and said with great composure, "if you are afraid, Sir, you may ride back again;" and then continued his observations. After having seen every thing he wished, he said to the page, "Now I have done, you may pack up again." He then mounted his horse; rode gently towards the camp; and conversed with the adjutant upon indifferent subjects.

IN the second Silesian war, the king rode out with a very small suite to recognize the motions of the enemy. A party

of pandures * lay in ambuscade in a wood, through which he was obliged to pass, and several shots were fired at his suite, though without effect. The king was not in the least disconcerted; when suddenly a foldier of the corps des Chasseurs, called out, Sire! Sire! save your life, from behind the next tree a man is aiming at your majesty. The king turned round with great calmness, saw the pandure, who had just taken his aim, lifted up his stick, and called to him in a threatening tone of voice, You! You! there, Sir! The pandur immediately grounded his firelock, took off his hat, and stood in a respectful posture, till the king had passed by.

IN the year 1782, the king went out to see several mines blown up, which had been laid the autumn before near Potsdam, in order to make an experiment, whether the powder would keep dry and good in

* Pandures are free corps in the Austrian service, notorious for their cowardice and cruel rapacity.

them

them through the winter. The experiment fully answered the king's expectation, and he seemed highly satisfied; when suddenly all the officers who accompanied him were alarmed by the falling of a granate, weighing about half a pound, upon the king's thigh. The accident might have produced dangerous consequences, but their fears were soon quieted. "This time," said the king, with his usual tranquillity and presence of mind, "this time, a blue spot will be all the consequence."

THE king of Prussia gained the victory in the battle at Sohr, by the loss of all his baggage, which fell into the hands of the enemy. In the evening he wished for something to eat, but nothing was to be had. At last, two bottles of Hungarian wine were discovered, and brought to the king; but he wished for something to eat, as well as to drink, and somebody was ordered to search the whole camp for food.

food. At last, a whole loaf of bread was found in the possession of a soldier, belonging to a West-Prussian regiment. The messenger offered the man a ducat for his loaf; but he refused it, and said, that if he could eat the ducat as well as the loaf, he would change, but not else. But when he heard that it was for the king's supper, he resolved to sell part of it for the ducat; and in order to satisfy himself that he had not been imposed upon, he stole after the messenger, saw the bread delivered, and that the king eat it with the greatest avidity.

The king then enquired, whence they had procured it? the soldier was brought before him; the king thanked him, and ordered him to ask a favour. The soldier accordingly requested a trifling office * in a vil-

* The office the soldier asked for was that of *schulze*. In every village a man is appointed to this office from among the peasants, by their choice, and with the approbation of the lord of the manor.

He is the first character among the peasants, and commonly, in proportion to his ignorance, feels himself

a village in Prussia, and it was granted him, *because he had satisfied the hunger of a monarch.*

IN the year 1761, the Austrians and Russians united their forces, and formed an army of 120,000 men. The king of Prussia, whose troops consisted only of fifty battalions of infantry, and eighty

self of more importance in his situation than the chief-justice of the province. His house is frequently the alehouse, where all the politics of the village are discussed, and where his opinion presides over every other.—By virtue of his office, he publishes all orders, decrees, and mandates of the sovereign; executes the warrants for the levying of troops, and apprehending of criminals; his concurrence is necessary to the validity of all contracts, agreements, and wills, made among the peasants of his village. He likewise settles all trifling differences that occur between them, and has some small emolument, and a great deal of trouble, annexed to this his petty jurisdiction. In a large village he is frequently assisted by one or two substantial men, upon whom some share of his authority and importance then devolves. This office seems to have some small similarity with that of the tythingmen, established in England by king Alfred the Great.

squadrons

squadrons of horse, could not venture to give them battle, without risking the entire destruction of his small army. He took therefore so advantageous a post near Bunzelwitz, that the enemy found it would be connected with great danger to attack him. In this manner he kept this immense body in a state of inaction for the space of twenty days; and the art he shewed upon this occasion was the more to be admired, as he was totally unpractised in the arts of delay, in any of his operations. While confined in this camp, he was every night in the trenches, and often staid till break of day at the fires kindled in different parts of the camp. "Take a bundle of straw with you," said he one night to an attendant, "that I may not be obliged to sleep upon the bare ground, as I have done for these several nights."

THE following is an extract of a letter from an officer to his friend, written after

after the unfortunate battle of Cuner-
dorf.

*** " There remained only 500 men
with the king. The regiments are so re-
duced, that they look like so many com-
panies. I saw the king this morning in
an open farm house, half destroyed by the
Cossacks, as fast asleep upon a bundle of
straw, as if he were in perfect security.
His hat half covered his face; his sword
lay drawn by his side. At his feet snored
two of his adjutants upon the bare ground.
One grenadier watched at the door. The
monarch seems to possess the same com-
mand over the strength and powers of his
body, and to use sleep and refreshment as
much at his own option, as he is perfect
master of the movements of his mind,
&c. &c.

IN the second Silesian war, the king
shared all the dangers and fatigues of his
troops. He once marched with the gre-
nadiers of his regiment of guards, till very
late

late at night. At last halt was made, the king alighted and ordered the grenadiers to light a fire, as it was extremely cold. He then wrapped himself up in his great coat and sat himself down upon a bundle of wood to the fire, and his grenadiers laid themselves upon the ground round about him. Soon after, general Ziethen came up, took a bundle of wood, and sat himself down by the king. They were both extremely fatigued and fell asleep. But the king's sleep was broken, he frequently opened his eyes, and observed that general Ziethen had slipped from his seat and that a grenadier attempted to place a bundle of wood under his head for a pillow. "Bravo, my son," said the king softly, "the brave old man is much fatigued." Presently another grenadier rose half asleep, reeled to the fire, and lighted his pipe. By accident he struck against the general's foot, and the king, whose attention was entirely directed to his friend, called to him and the rest: "Grenadiers, be quiet, take care you do not wake my old Ziethen, he is much fatigued."

IN

IN the year 1761, Schweidniz was retaken by the Austrian troops in a manner altogether unaccountable, considering the strength of the place, and the compleat state of defence it was then in. When the king first received the news of the disaster, he was inclined to accuse the governor, general von Zastrow of treachery: but his heart was too generous to retain long a suspicion against an officer who had hitherto served him with unimpeached integrity, and he allowed that he would perhaps himself have been defeated by the uncommon and unexpected manner in which the town was assailed. He therefore recollected himself immediately and said: "This is a terrible misfortune! But we must endeavour to recover it." And to general Zastrow he wrote: "In your letter to me, you make use of the words, which Francis the first wrote to his mother after the battle of Pavia." "We have lost every thing, but our honour." "As I cannot clearly comprehend how this misfortune can have happened, I defer my decision

decision upon the subject till I obtain further information. It is certainly a very extraordinary affair.

THE day before the defeat at Hochkirck, it was observed from one wing of the Prussians, that the Austrians opposite to them were busy in throwing up ramparts, and the officer who commanded that wing, sent an adjutant to the king to inform him of what he had seen. He at the same time wished to know, whether he should fire upon them, in order to interrupt them in their work, as he believed he could reach them with the largest guns. The king ordered him to let them alone, till the next day, and dismissed him. But just as the adjutant left the tent, the king called after him, and asked him: "How much he supposed the charge of a cannon might cost." The officer was embarrassed at the unexpected question, but as he knew the king always expected some kind of answer, he said: "About a
Louis

Louis d'or." "And tell me," continued the king, "How many Louis d'ors do you think the rascals are worth? You may fire a few at them, but not many." But it was found upon trial, that the guns would not reach them.

MISCELLANEOUS ANECDOTES.

* **Q**UINTUS ICILIUS once brought a painting to the king, the work of an artist, a native of his dominions. The king was at first sight struck with its merit, and expressed his warm approbation, but as soon as he heard that the painter was a native, he said, "Take it away, I do not like it." When the artist

* It must be remembered, that notwithstanding the authenticity of this and the following anecdote, the king gave great encouragement to the artists of his dominions, and they prove that the king was capricious, but not that he was illiberal.

R

heard

heard this, he was so mortified by the contempt with which his performance had been treated, that he immediately threw it into the fire. It happened soon after, that the king wanted a piece to match another in one of his apartments, and he sent to Quintus, desiring that he would buy for him the picture he had shewn him, as he wished to fill a vacancy with it. Quintus informed him that it was no more to be had, but that the artist, as it had the misfortune not to please his majesty, had burnt it. "That is carrying caprice very far," said the king. "Yes," replied Quintus, "this painter, though but a German, has all the caprice of an Italian."

IT has already been observed that the king had a great partiality for the French language. In manufactures requiring taste and elegance he likewise gave that nation the preference to his own subjects. But notwithstanding this, he liberally encouraged the manufactories of this kind in
his

his states, though he made little use of their productions himself.

The king had a snuff-box which was given him by general count Rothenburg, and upon which he set a very great value. Unfortunately the box fell from his hand, and the hinge broke. The king was much vexed at it, and mentioned the circumstance to one of his confidants. The gentleman told him that he might have it repaired to his satisfaction at Berlin. This the king at first doubted, as he believed it had been made at Paris. The snuff-box was, however, taken to an eminent artist, and repaired in so neat a manner, that it was impossible to see that it had ever been broken. The king seemed uncommonly pleased with the work, but when he was informed that the artist who had repaired, had actually made the box, he gave it to the person who brought it, and said: "You may take the box yourself, I can now make no further use of it."

IN the year 1765, the king gave an officer of the engineers an unlimited commission to repair one of his fortresses according to his own ideas. The officer was an avaricious man, and by his extortions and oppressions, he exasperated the peasants, whose duty it was to provide carts and horses for the undertaking, so much, that they made a complaint to the king against him. The officer was ordered to defend himself, but as he knew he had nothing to urge in his favour, he went home and hanged himself. Upon this his effects were seized, and he was found to possess above 60,000 dollars in ready cash, besides many other valuables. This was reported to the king, and the question asked, how he would have this money disposed of: "I will hear nothing about the matter," said the monarch; and the widow remained in quiet possession of the fruits of her husband's extortions.

There are several instances, that the king, instead of punishing those who had defrauded him of money, suffered them to

possess what they had embezzled, and only forbid them ever to come near him again.

A French officer of engineers deserted, and offered his services to the king. His offer was accepted, and in order to ensure a good reception upon his introduction to his majesty, he presented to the king several plans of French fortresses of his own drawing. "I thank you," said the king, "for your present; but you shall never set a foot in any of my fortresses, as I see you make so bad a use of your talents. But I will employ you to instruct my miners and pioneers." The king kept his word; for the officer was never employed in any other service.

MONSIEUR T—— deserted from the French, and entered into the Prussian service under the assumed title of count D——. He soon acquired the king's favour, and

was promoted. The so called count was at last made lieutenant colonel, and had then the impudence to introduce a lady whom he called his wife, to court, and to present her to the princess royal. The princess grew fond of her company, and shewed her much favour. She at last died, and another lady appeared, who marred the whole plot, by proving herself the real wife of Mr. T——, alias count D——, and the countess proved to have been a common fille de joye at Paris. This opportunity was eagerly laid hold of, to ruin the count in the good opinion of the king, and his conduct was painted to him in the worst colours possible. The king accordingly wrote to him the following letter:

“ To lieutenant colonel count D——,
or otherwise to Mr. T——.

“ When I took you into my service, it was perfectly indifferent to me, whether you had a wife, or kept a mistress. I therefore pass over in silence, your impudence in introducing her to the royal family.

family. She is dead, and with her the affair may drop. But I advise you to be more careful how you introduce the lady, who is now brought upon the scene. Be faithful in your duty to me. At your age and mine, a man ought to care little for the other sex.

FREDERIC."

AT a general review, curiosity had brought together an incredible number of people. "By what means," asked a prince who rode with the king, "may all these people get their livelihood?" The king immediately answered: "By cheating one another, and every one of them, without exception, by cheating me."

UPON the establishment of a new regiment, several Italian noblemen offered their services, and requested the commanding officer of the regiment to inform the king, that they were willing to serve

R 4

him

him as officers in the regiment. The officer accordingly acquainted the king with their offer, and received the following answer:

“ My dear colonel,

“ I like the Italians well enough: this is evident from the large salaries I allow my opera singers. But I cannot say that I am very fond of employing them in my army, on account of their effeminacy, indolence, and ill-humour. I desire, therefore, that you decline the offer of these gentlemen in as polite a manner as you can.

FREDERIC.”

SOME of the ladies belonging to the opera at Berlin, who played the dumb parts of attendants on the heroes of the stage, petitioned the king that he would grant them an annual salary, as he did every other performer at the opera;

opera;* and represented that they could not subsist upon the scanty earnings of an evening's performance. The king wrote under their petition the following:

“ In applying to me in this business you have been entirely mistaken. It is an affair which concerns your own kings and queens, and you must apply to them. It is a point with me, never to meddle with the concerns of other courts.”

A MAJOR in the army had signalized himself upon a certain occasion, and the king wishing to reward him, presented him with the order *Pour le Merite*. The major humbly thanked his majesty, but added: “ But what good will that do me?”

* The performers at the opera in the residences of most of the German courts, are paid by their respective princes, and are part of the court establishment. The access to these entertainments is therefore freely open to every well dressed person, and in towns not very populous, no great inconvenience is felt, or dreaded from too great a crowd.

me?" "Well then," said the king, "I will give you the government of a province." "Your majesty," replied the major, "is too gracious; but what good will that do me?" "Well, if that won't do neither," said the king, "I will settle a pension upon you." "I humbly thank your majesty," replied the major, "I am unworthy of all this favour; but what good will that do me?" The king said no more, but when the major had retired, the king asked: "What is it that I can do for this man, what does he want more?" One of the officers who was present, informed the king, that the major had a habit of adding, without any kind of meaning, to every thing he said; "What good will that do me?" "Well," said the king, "I should have known that, for, in fact, I have given too much: however he may keep it, as he has got it."

IN the beginning of his reign, Frederic II. was extremely fond of monkeys, and kept several of them for his amusement in
his

his closet. One day he missed one of them, and after much fruitless search, imagining he might have got out of the room, he opened the door and called: "Mr. Privy Counsellor,* will you come here?" A clerk of a law-office who waited in the apartment, to deliver some papers to the king, supposing that he was meant, came immediately forward, with much formal ceremony. The king was surprised at his sudden appearance, and said: "I did not mean you, sir, but as it has so happened, you may as well be privy counsellor." And the title was actually conferred upon him.†

THE King of Prussia was uncommonly well versed in the genealogy of the old noble families in his dominions. He was also very cautious how he promoted any but persons descended from a noble family to any rank in his army, and never did it

* Hofrath, the name he had given him.

† A proof of what is asserted in the note of page 190.

without particular reasons. When the long wars he carried on had very much thinned the nobility in his states, he elevated most of those whom he was obliged to advance to the rank of officers, from the rank of citizens to that of noblemen, or dismissed them after the peace.

It frequently happened at his reviews, for what reasons is not known, that the king would call the rank of an officer in question, and perhaps say to him abruptly: "Who are you? you are no nobleman;" and then insist upon his assertion, in spite of any thing that might be said to the contrary. At one of his reviews the king asked an officer of considerable rank what was his name? The officer told him, and the king immediately replied: "You are no nobleman." "The emperor Rudolph the second," returned the officer very coolly, "has many hundred years ago condemned to the payment of a fine of ten marks of pure gold, every man who dares to doubt the rank of my family." "Your most obedient," replied the king, "I have no money by me:" and rode on.

IN

IN a Roman catholic town in Silesia, several of the silver offerings dedicated to the Virgin Mary, were discovered to be missing. After much fruitless search and enquiry who might be the thief, the clerk observed, that a certain soldier was always the first to attend divine service, and the last to quit the church, and a suspicion naturally fell upon him. He was therefore stopped the next time he went out, searched, and several of the offerings were found upon him. But notwithstanding this positive evidence against him, he still insisted that he had not stolen the articles, but that the holy Virgin Mary, to whom he always applied for assistance in his distress, had brought the offerings to him herself, and thereby relieved from time to time his necessities.

This defence was by no means regarded; he was tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to a severe punishment. The sentence was as usual laid before the king for his approbation; but upon reading the case, and the defence of the soldier, he

he ordered it to be immediately submitted to the decision of several clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church, "Whether or no, according to the established doctrines of their church, the assertion of the soldier might be grounded?" Their answer was unanimously, "that miracles, though seldom wrought, could not be supposed to have entirely ceased." The king, in consequence of this decision, wrote underneath the sentence the following:

"The supposed thief is acquitted of
"the crime laid to his charge, as he
"continues to insist upon the truth of
"the miracle; and as it is, according
"to the unanimous decision of the di-
"vines of his church, not impossible
"but that it may have happened. But
"I hereby prohibit, under the severest
"penalties, that he in future accept of
"any present whatsoever, either from
"the holy Virgin, or from any other
"saint, under any pretext whatever.

FREDERIC."

A PRIVATE soldier in the first battalion of the king's body guards, possessed the favour of the king in so great a degree, that he was permitted to enter his closet at all times without any ceremony. The soldier frequently made use of the king's favour in order to get money from him; and if he was refused, or the king said that he had none by him, he would often say, "Come, let me have it; I know you have some ducats in your leathern purse;" and he commonly got what he wanted.

This soldier once gave his officer ill language when upon duty; and when the officer threatened to have him arrested, he lowered his musket, and presenting the bayonet to the officer, made a motion as if he would go up to him. However, he stopt short, and remained at the distance of a few steps in that posture. In consequence of this he was arrested; and the affair being reported to the king, he was ordered to be tried by a court-martial, and was condemned to die. But
so

so sure was he of the king's favour, that nothing could persuade him to prepare for his doom; and even at the place of execution, he shewed that he thought himself certain of a pardon. But his hopes were in vain. He was shot, as an example to others, and fell a sacrifice to military discipline.

A PEASANT of the name of Havenbrook had a law-suit with his neighbour, one Mertens, about a piece of ground claimed by both parties. The field was adjudged to the former. This so exasperated Mertens, that notwithstanding repeated warnings, he drove his cattle upon Havenbrook's fields. Havenbrook at last sent his son, a lad of about nineteen, to drive away the cattle; this produced a quarrel; they fought, and by an unlucky blow upon the head, Mertens was killed upon the spot. Young Havenbrook was apprehended, tried, and condemned to three years imprisonment and hard labour in

in the house of correction. The sentence was, as usual, sent to the king for his confirmation, and he wrote the following underneath:

" You call yourselves wise and learned
 " judges and counsellors, and are not
 " ashamed to pass so improper a sen-
 " tence? According to the laws of na-
 " ture and reason, it is my pleasure, that
 " Havenbrook be beheaded, and his body
 " buried under the gallows.

*Surely a
 mistake*

FREDERIC."

WHEN the king was posted in the neighbourhood of Strelen, he took his quarters in a house situated at some distance from the town, and had usually no guards about him but a few grenadiers. Baron Warkotch, a nobleman of the neighbourhood, had concerted a plan with a Roman Catholic priest to take the king prisoner, and to deliver him up to the Austrian troops. For the better carrying on of their design, they corresponded

S

with

with an Austrian officer, who stood in the neighbourhood; and their plan was the more likely to succeed, as Baron Warkotch had free access to the king, who always received him very graciously. The gamekeeper of the nobleman had been frequently sent to the priest with letters; and the frequency of the correspondence, and several private meetings of the parties, gave him some suspicion of what might be going forward. He therefore opened a letter which was entrusted to his care, and which he was ordered to deliver to the priest in the night of the 29th of November; and finding by it that his suspicions were well-grounded, he hastened with the letter to the king. The king read it, and an officer was immediately dispatched to seize the traitors; but they escaped through a back window, and the baron's horse being ready saddled, and in waiting, he got clear off, with the loss of nothing but his estates and reputation. The officer returned with an account of the ill-success of his expedition; and the king,
instead

instead of punishing his neglect, only said, "Go back to your regiment; you are no conjuror; you shall not be employed again in a business of this nature."

THE town of Greifenberg had the misfortune to be burnt to the ground, and the king generously rebuilt the whole place at his own expence. The inhabitants sent deputies to the king, who was then at Hirschberg, to return him thanks for this benevolent proof of his favour: "You have no reason," said the king, "to thank me: it is my duty to assist my subjects in distress. For no other purpose, for no other purpose am I king."

WHEN the king travelled through Prussia in the year 1784, the president of the provincial court, M. von Massow, had a private audience of his majesty,

at which the king addressed him nearly as follows:

“ I have made you president of my
“ court of justice, and I ought to be
“ acquainted with you. I am, properly
“ speaking, the chief justice of my king-
“ doms, and should myself see to it,
“ that justice is duly administered. But,
“ as I cannot attend to every thing my-
“ self, I must have such people as you
“ are, in my service, whose duty it is
“ to do justice to individuals. — I
“ have a great responsibility upon me.
“ I must not only answer for the evil I
“ do, but for the good I leave undone;
“ and you are in the same predicament.
“ You must be strictly impartial, and
“ judge without respect of persons, let
“ the parties be princes, noblemen, or
“ peasants. This I must insist upon,
“ *or you and I may part at once.* Have
“ you any estates ?”

No, sire!

“ Will you buy any ?”

I have no money to do it, sire.

“ Well

“ Well then, you know what poverty
 “ is, and so much the more is it your
 “ duty to assist those who are in dis-
 “ tress.”

WHEN in the year 1741 the king was encamped near Molwitz, he rode out to reconnoitre the village Zeindel. A peasant, an inhabitant of the village, whose name was Margner, observed, that a body of the enemy's troops lay in ambush in a ditch, in order to intercept the king on his return; in which they must undoubtedly have succeeded, had not the honest peasant, at the risk of his life, apprized the king of their design. The king promised to reward him, but he was forgotten: he fell into the utmost want and misery; and his timidity prevented him from reminding the king of his promise. On his death-bed, the old man mentioned the circumstance to his daughter, who was married to one Schweinert, a taylor at Breslau; and as she

likewise afterwards came into great distress, and had a family of six children to provide for, she ventured to petition the king for relief, and mention to him the promise made to her late father. In consequence of this, the king wrote the following letter to count Hoym, minister of state for Silesia :

“ The circumstances mentioned in the
“ petition of Mrs. Schweinert, and the
“ service done me by her late father, I
“ perfectly recollect. She well deserves
“ the reward I promised to him, and I
“ will, that she shall reap the advantage
“ of it. You are therefore hereby directed,
“ according to the prayer of her
“ petition, to provide for her and her
“ husband, by giving him a post suited
“ to the abilities he may possess.”

He was accordingly soon after well provided for.

TWO of the king's principal officers presented, in the spring of 1785, the
list

list of the proposed increase of the army to the king. Upon this the king addressed them as follows:

“ As healthy, gentlemen, as I may
“ appear, I find the attacks of my disorder so much more sudden, frequent,
“ and various, that I frequently expect
“ every moment to be my last.

“ In the mean time I have issued all
“ necessary orders. I have likewise planned the manœuvres which I mean to
“ be performed in the month of May,
“ at the general review near Berlin, and
“ now deliver them to you for execution. At the same time I assure you,
“ that unless I am entirely confined
“ to my bed, I shall get into my carriage, and attend the review. I shall
“ then appear at the head of my troops,
“ direct their movements myself, and by
“ that means give the strangers who may
“ be present, an opportunity of judging
“ of my good and active state of health.”

IT is well known that Frederic the second rose remarkable early in the morning, and in general allowed a very short part of his time to sleep. But as age and infirmities increased upon him, his sleep was broken and disturbed, and when he fell asleep towards the morning, he frequently missed his usual early hour of rising. This loss of time, as he deemed it, he bore very impatiently, and gave strict orders to his attendants never to suffer him to sleep longer than four o'clock in the morning, and to pay no attention to his unwillingness to rise. One morning at the appointed time, the page whose turn it was to attend him, and who had not been long in his service, came to his bed and awoke him. "*Let me sleep but a little longer,*" said the monarch, "*I am still much fatigued.*" "Your majesty has given positive orders I should wake you so early," replied the page. "*But another quarter of an hour more.*" "Not one minute," said the page, "it has struck four, I am ordered to insist upon your majesty's rising."

ing." "Well, said the king, *you are a brave lad; had you let me sleep on you would have fared ill for your neglect.*"

IN the king's last illness, he frequently gave proofs of the humanity and kindness of his heart to his servants and domestics. He once awoke in the middle of the night, and asked his attendant what was the hour. "It has just struck two," replied the servant. "It is still very early," said the king, "but I can get no sleep. Go and see if my people are still awake; but do not wake them, for they are fatigued. But if you find Newman (*the king's buffar of the bed chamber*) awake, tell him, that you imagine the king may soon wish to get up. But by no means wake any body."

IN one of these sleepless and restless nights, which rendered the king's last illness extremely troublesome to him, he asked his attendant what o'clock it was? "It is twelve," said the servant.

King.

King. I find I cannot sleep, I wish you would amuse me by telling me some story.

The attendant, who was a plain honest Pomeranian, could recollect nothing to entertain him with, and the king therefore helped him out by asking him:

What country do you come from?

Serv. I was born in a village at the back of Pomerania.

King. Are your parents still alive?

Serv. My old mother is.

King. How does she get her livelihood?

Serv. By spinning.

King. How much may she earn a day?

Serv. Every day of her life she earns her six dreiers.*

King. She cannot live delicately for that, I should think?

Serv. Hum! In Pomerania it is cheap living.

King. Have you ever sent her any thing?

Serv. O dear, yes! I have several times sent her a couple of dollars.

* About Three-pence.

King. You have done bravely, my lad! you are a good fellow. You have likewise much trouble in attending me. But have a little patience, and if you behave well, I will collect something for you. He then dismissed him.

Some days after, it was again the turn of the Pomeranian to watch with the king. When he came in, the king ordered him to look into the window seat, "For there," said he, "I have collected something for you." The servant looked, found a number of gold pieces, and was embarrassed whether he should take them all, or not. He therefore only took a few, and holding them in the palm of his hand, shewed them the king, and said: "I am not to take more than these, I suppose?" "No, no," said the king, "take them all; and I have sent some to your mother too." Upon enquiry, the honest Pomeranian found that the king had granted his mother an annuity of 100 dollars *per annum*.

FREDERIC

FREDERIC II. was particularly attentive to the health of his common soldiers. He visited the hospitals himself, spoke with and comforted the patients, and enquired particularly into the care taken of the sick and wounded. A passage in Dr. Laforest's book upon the diseases of the feet, deserves in this respect the attention of every general. It is as follows :

“ One of the greatest monarchs of any age, I mean the present King of Prussia, having daily seen the many inconveniences which his soldiers have suffered, after long and fatiguing marches; issued at the beginning of the last war, an order, the regulations contained in which, deserve to be adopted by every other army. He ordered, namely, that after every long day's march, the surgeons of the regiments should examine the feet of the soldiers, and endeavour to prevent the least inflammation that may seem to be coming on, and which might render their duty troublesome and painful to them.

“ This

“ This measure is an instance of that degree of minute attention which every general ought to pay to his private soldiers.”

WHEN in the Bavarian war, the king of Prussia retired with his army out of Bohemia, the prince of Prussia* conducted the division under his command, with so much skill, courage, and success, that the king expressed his admiration and satisfaction in the warmest terms. He afterwards went to meet him, and said to him: “ From this day I shall no more look upon you as my nephew.” The prince was struck at being addressed in this manner, but the king soon relieved him, by adding: “ I shall in future consider you as my son. You have done every thing that the most experienced of my generals, every thing that I myself could have done upon the occasion.”

* The present king, Frederic William the second.

THE king had a great regard for the English ambassador, Mr. Mitchell. During the second Silesian war, Mr. Mitchell informed him that the English had gained a very considerable advantage over the French, and made use of the expression: "*By the help of God*, we have entirely defeated the French." "So," said the king, "is God one of your allies?" "Certainly, sire," replied Mitchell, "and he is the only one who demands no subsidies of us." "And he often serves you accordingly," returned the king.

WHEN the King of Prussia and the emperor met at Neisse, they once happened to come together to the bottom of a flight of stairs, and neither would go up first, and take precedence of the other. They stood and bowed, and scraped, and complimented, and each politely wished to give way to the other. At last the king of Prussia got behind the emperor, and
pushed

pushed him forward. "Ho! ho!" said the emperor, "if you begin manœuvre with me, I must unavoidably go where you please!" and walked up first.

A FRENCH nobleman, who waited upon the king at Sans-Souci, expressed his astonishment at seeing the emperor's portrait in every apartment of the palace, and asked the king, what might be the reason of his thus honouring the portrait of his greatest enemy? "Oh!" said the king, "the emperor is a busy and enterprising young monarch, and I find it necessary, always to have an eye upon him."

WHEN Voltaire was at the Prussian court, and peaceably enjoyed the highest admiration and praise that superior talents and wit could ensure; an English gentleman arrived at Berlin, who had so extraordinary a memory, that he could repeat a long composition in prose or verse, if once read

or

or recited to him; without missing a word. The king had the curiosity to put him to the test; the Englishman appeared, and succeeded to the astonishment of the whole court. It happened that immediately after this trial, Voltaire sent the king word, that with the king's permission, he should do himself the honour to read to him a poem he had just finished. The king gave him permission to come, but at the same time resolved to divert himself at the expence of the poet. He accordingly placed the Englishman behind a screen, and ordered him to pay particular attention to what Voltaire should read; Voltaire came, and read his poem with much emphasis, in hopes of obtaining the king's warm approbation. But to his great disappointment the king seemed perfectly cold, and indifferent to what he was reading. The poem was finished; Voltaire asked the king his opinion upon it, and received for answer: "That his majesty had lately observed, that Monsieur Voltaire fathered the works of others, and gave them out for his own. This was a degree of

of

of effrontery he should not have thought him capable of, and he could not but be highly displeased at it." Voltaire was astonished; he complained that he was wronged, and protested by every thing sacred, that he did not deserve the reproach. "I will immediately convince you," replied the king, "of the truth of my assertion. The verses you have just now read, are the composition of an English gentleman, whose claim is undoubted." Voltaire defended himself with still more warmth, and swore the poem was his own. "Well then," said the king, "come forth, sir, and repeat the verses of which Voltaire pretends to be the author." The Englishman came forward, and with the greatest composure repeated the poem, without missing a single passage. "Now," cried the king, "are you not obliged to confess that my accusation is founded in truth?" "Heavens!" cried Voltaire, "why sleeps your lightning! why is your vengeance withheld from punishing the crimes of a miscreant, who dares to rob me of my laurels! Here

T

sorcery

forcery is employed, and I am driven to despair!"—The king laughed heartily at this scene of poetic fury, and rewarded the Englishman liberally for the amusement he had procured him.

THE steps taken by Frederic the Second in the cause of Arnold the miller, were of such serious consequences to the Prussian dominions, and throw so strong a light upon his character, that though it requires some knowledge of the constitution of that country to comprehend, in its full extent, the mischief they did, or might have done, I hope the relation will not be unenterprising to the English reader. The facts are extracted from the judicial proceedings themselves, and I have endeavoured to place them in such a light, as to render them clear and intelligible.

A small rivulet watered the contiguous estates of M. von Gerfsdorf*, and of count

* The German word *von*, prefixed to a name, always denotes the bearer to be a nobleman.

von Schmettau, which turned several mills, and supplied several fish-ponds with water in its course. Upon the estate of count Schmettau Pomerzig stood a mill, which was occupied by one Arnold, a man of no very good character. Arnold was no subject or vassal * of the count, but possessed the mill upon a perpetual lease; and provided the rent was regularly paid, he was at liberty to dispose of it as he pleased, as his own private property. In the year 1773 he was very considerably in arrears, and count Schmettau was under the necessity of bringing an action against him for the rent, and a warrant of distress upon the premises was granted. He however had still patience with the miller, and did not put the warrant in force, in hopes that matters might be accommodated by gentler means. But in the year 1777, the count was again obliged to sue out a new warrant, upon which the mill, which Arnold had bought for 300 dollars, was sold by

* See note, page 193.

public auction for 600. The debt amounted to 900 dollars, and count Schmettau was a considerable loser by the affair.

Arnold, who was by the sale of his mill in consequence of this decree of court, turned adrift, instituted an action in the provincial court of Newmark against count Schmettau, for an illegal and oppressive ejection. In his declaration he alledged, that he had been prevented from earning enough to pay his rent and to support himself, having been deprived of the greatest part of the water which had formerly turned his mill, by a new fish-pond made by M. von Gerfsdorf above him, into which the course of the water had been diverted. This suit was decided against Arnold in favour of count Schmettau, against whom nothing could be proved, as he had no concern in M. von Gerfsdorf's pond; and it was hinted by the court, that no action could possibly lie upon the case, unless against M. von Gerfsdorf, for having turned the course of the river.

Upon this Arnold brought a new action before the provincial court against M. von Gerisdorf, and represented himself as having been a subject of M. von Gerisdorf, who had first deprived him of the water necessary to the working of his mill, and had then, in consequence of his being rendered incapable of paying his rent, turned him out, sold the mill, and cruelly deprived him of every possible means of subsistence. After a strict examination of every circumstance, Arnold was again cast. He was, however, not yet quiet, but complained heavily to the king of the injustice done him; and the king referred the suit to the supreme chamber of civil justice at Berlin. In this court the cause was again tried; and unfortunately, a report was made to the king, which, without adducing any argument on either side, merely stated, that the cause had been tried, and sentence given against Arnold. The supreme chamber of justice probably broke through their usual custom of mentioning the grounds upon which their decision was founded,

founded, because they thought it unnecessary to repeat the arguments and facts stated by the provincial court of Newmark, to which they referred. This, however, confirmed the king in his suspicions, that the two courts who had now decided upon the cause, had been guilty of gross partiality and injustice, in refusing their protection to an oppressed subject, and screened the wealthy and powerful nobleman.

The king of Prussia had conceived, and obstinately persisted in an idea, that in every suit between a noble and a subject, oppression on the part of the noble was the cause of the complaint. The subjects, who well knew the prejudice of the king in their favour, were therefore encouraged in an *unconstitutional* refusal to perform the services they owed their lords, from which they had seldom to dread severe punishment; and the nobles found themselves in the dilemma, either of conniving at their insolence and neglect of duty, or of being continually harrassed by litigations, which, though they might

sometimes be decided in their favour, were, by the lenity of the punishments which ensued, incitements to new encroachments on the part of the subject.

These suspicions, which were continually awake in the king's mind, led him to a measure which diminished, and in fact almost annihilated the effective inquisitorial power of the provincial courts, without freeing them from their responsibility; which made them liable to censure or punishment for presumed injustice, and at the same time branded them with the imputation of a natural bias to partiality and unfair examination. Whenever a cause of any importance came before him, and sometimes in the most trifling cases, if he but supposed a possibility of injustice, he commissioned some officer, quartered in the neighbourhood of the parties concerned, or perhaps from some distant place, to examine into the affair, and to report to him his opinion. It was possible, that a very brave and skilful officer might be a very bad lawyer; he might find the task disagreeable; a
thousand

thousand things might render a man, professedly engaged in other pursuits, incapable of entering into a strict enquiry into the merits of a tedious and perplexed litigation; and though an officer, from his rank and character, might rationally be expected to be impartial and disinterested, every other circumstance in his character and situation was against his forming a right judgment, and making a legal report. On this account, an officer who received this commission, commonly left the task to be performed by his auditor*, a man, every circumstance in whose situation, might tend to bias him. Bribery; the hopes of ingratiating himself with the king, by a report flattering to his prejudices; opposition to, or jealousy of his brother lawyers on the bench of the provincial court; connexions with the neighbouring nobility, might all throw obstacles in the way of candid enquiry, and conscientious decision.

* See note, p. 27.

In the case of Arnold, the mischief done by this measure was excessive. The king's commission was issued to colonel von Heucking, a brave and worthy officer, but much advanced in years, and totally unfit for the tedious task enjoined upon him. Colonel von Heucking therefore ordered his auditor to make the desired enquiry. This man, whose name was Bech, had formerly been an attorney at Crossen, and the provincial court of Newmark had struck him off the roll, on account of iniquitous and illegal practices. A man of his character, had he not been actuated by any other self-interested motive, was ready to make any report he might be paid for; but upon this occasion he saw an opportunity of being completely revenged upon the provincial court. His report therefore stated every thing that Arnold could wish; that could be injurious to M. von Gersdorf, and that could fix an imputation of partiality and injustice upon the court. The report was so consonant to the favourite prejudice of the king, that he gave it full

full credit, and immediately ordered the high-chancellor, baron von Fürst, president of the supreme chamber of civil justice, a man of acknowledged abilities and unimpeached integrity, to appear before him, and to bring with him those members of the court, who had joined with him in confirming the sentence pronounced against Arnold. The chancellor, instead of bringing with him all the members of the bench, thought it sufficient to order the three assessors of the court, Friedel, Ransleben, and Graun, to accompany him. When they entered the king's closet, they found him lying upon the couch; his face was tied up with a handkerchief, but his eyes were full of fury and revenge. He was violent in his voice and language, and reproached them as the most atrocious criminals. None dared to open his lips. The chancellor attempted to speak, but the king cried, "Away with you, your place is already disposed of," and drove them from his presence. An officer, who waited in the antichamber, received immediate

ciate orders to carry them to the common jail; and orders were sent down to Cüstrin to apprehend the assessors of the provincial court of Newmark, and to carry them likewise to the common prison.

The king then dictated to one of his secretaries a statement of the whole proceedings, which he ordered to be inserted in all the public papers, and of which the following is an extract:

The first part states the case according to colonel Heucking's report, namely, that Arnold was a subject of M. von Gerisdorf; that the water which worked his mill had been diverted by his lord to the use of his fish-ponds; that after Arnold was thereby deprived of every means of supporting himself, and was still less able to pay his rent, M. von Gerisdorf had ejected him, sold his mill, and turned him adrift with his family to starve. That the provincial court of Newmark, instead of doing justice to the oppressed miller, had given sentence against him, which iniquitous sentence had been
after-

afterwards confirmed by the supreme court at Berlin, &c. &c. and then continues:

“ This is an act of the most flagrant
 “ injustice, and directly contrary to the
 “ gracious will of his majesty, who
 “ means to be a father to his country.
 “ It is his majesty’s express will, that
 “ throughout his dominions justice shall
 “ be impartially administered to every one
 “ of his subjects, whether they are noble
 “ or ignoble, whether they are rich or
 “ poor, without respect of persons. His
 “ majesty is therefore determined severely
 “ to punish those judges, who have de-
 “ cided in the case of the miller Arnold,
 “ and to hold them out to all his courts
 “ as a dreadful instance of the conse-
 “ quences of neglected or perverted jus-
 “ tice; and his majesty would have them
 “ to know, that the meanest peasant, nay
 “ even the beggar, is equally, with his
 “ majesty, entitled to the rights of hu-
 “ manity, and has an equal claim upon
 “ strict and impartial justice * * *. And
 “ if the courts of justice in his majesty’s
 “ dominions commit any injustice of any
 “ kind,

“ kind, they will find that they have A
“ KING to deal with. A court which
“ is not guided by the strictest and most
“ inviolable rules of justice, is worse
“ than a band of robbers. The latter
“ we may avoid, or defend ourselves
“ against, but thieves and rogues, who
“ wear the cloak of justice, in order
“ to cover their selfish and interested
“ views, may rob with impunity, no
“ one is safe from their clutches, they
“ are worse than highwaymen, and de-
“ serve double the punishment.

“ His majesty has appointed a new
“ high-chancellor; but at the same time
“ wishes it may be known throughout
“ his dominions, that he himself will
“ see to it that justice is done to all
“ his subjects; and his courts must ex-
“ pect the severest and most exemplary
“ punishment, if in any one instance
“ they dare, in the smallest degree, to
“ deviate from the strict line of equity
“ and right * * *.

Berlin,
Dec. 11, 1779.

FREDERIC.”

The

The king then wrote to baron von Zedliz, one of his ministers of state, commanding him to examine the imprisoned judges, and to execute the sentence he had pronounced against them, which was the loss of their places, and one year's, at least, close imprisonment in one of his fortresses ; a dreadful punishment indeed. The unfortunate judges were, the high-chancellor baron von Fürst, the assessors of the supreme court of civil justice, Friedel, Ransleben, and Graun, and the four principal assessors of the provincial court of Newmark, Bush, Newman, Shiebler, and Bandel, and the justiciary of Pomerzig (the place where Arnold lived) Slecker. The three remaining members of the supreme court, Uhl, Kircheisen, and Goslar, would likewise have shared the same fate, had the high-chancellor brought them with him to the audience. But by the hasty caprice of the king they were overlooked, and no notice was taken of their having concurred in the sentence of the court.

The

The minister of state referred in course the order to the supreme criminal court, which, after the most minute investigation, made a very spirited report to the king, in justification of the sentences pronounced by the two degraded courts.

So far the king's conduct might have been guided by an ardent desire to avenge the wrongs of the oppressed; his judgment might have been deceived by false representation; he might have been really convinced that he was acting right; his prejudices against those, whom he conceived to be the petty tyrants of his subjects, disguised under the garb of justice and generosity, might have led him to act the tyrant, when he meant to be the protector of his dominions. Every circumstance hitherto seems to justify this opinion. But if his subsequent conduct does not appear to have arisen in obstinate caprice, in a determination to shew himself the monarch, and in a reluctance to believe or acknowledge himself fallible, it will be difficult to ascribe it to any other motive which

which can do honour either to his head or to his heart.

By the report of the supreme criminal court, every circumstance alledged in the first statement of the provincial court at Newmark, appeared to be founded in truth. Besides this it was proved, that by a deed of above 250 years standing, M. von Gersdorf had an undoubted right to the use of the water of the rivulet for the supply of his ponds, and that the ponds in question had then existed: that he had not diverted the course of the stream, but had rather increased it by carrying the water of a bog he had drained into it: that his pond had been empty, and sown with corn for five years of the time in which Arnold neglected to pay his rent to count Schmettau; that by the decayed condition of the mill, and the neglect of Arnold in repairing it, one fourth of the water was wasted: that during part of the year, the mill was prevented from working by the swelling of the river Oder, which stopped the stream of the rivulet: that another miller upon the same stream, under the

U

same

same disadvantages, by careful management paid his rent easily, and obtained a comfortable livelihood: that the assessors of the court had taken every circumstance in favour of Arnold, into consideration, and had allowed them all their weight: and above all, that M. von Gersdorf had no concern with the mill or miller; that supposing his ponds had been full every year, it could hardly make any difference to the miller, unless perhaps in very dry seasons; and that the seasons during the time of complaint, had been remarkably wet.— These and other arguments were enforced in the most nervous and spirited language, attested by incontrovertible evidence, and signed by every member of the court.

The king read the report, seemingly with great attention. But without taking the least notice of any thing else contained in it, he only reversed the sentence against the two assessors, Ransleben of Berlin, and Shiebler of Cüstrin, in consequence of their having given their opinion rather more in favour of Arnold than the rest, (although they joined in the decree against him)

him) and gave them their liberty. The condemnation of all the rest he confirmed, and added further to their punishment, that they should pay the full price of the mill, and restore the same to Arnold, besides paying the full costs of all his suits, and making him a compensation for loss of time and business.

To the immortal honour of baron von Zedliz, the king's confidential minister, he refused to countersign this unjust and despotic decree, and the disgrace he fell into, and continued in till the king's death, is the most honourable testimony to his manly and undaunted integrity, which he upon that occasion could have received.

To comprehend, (as has been already observed,) in their fullest extent the fatal consequences which attended this decision, universally known to be unjust, some knowledge of the constitution of the Prussian government is necessary. In a country where the peasants are in a degree of subjection to the power of the nobles, which, though ever so gently exercised, must be constantly felt by them,

any probable hopes of powerful protection in a struggle for emancipation, must produce, if not a revolution, yet a strong convulsion in the system. The peasants were at that time prepared to make a violent attempt for the recovery of their natural rights, and that strong principle, (which so firmly fetters the ideas of all the peasantry who are in any degree of slavery, in the countries I have seen) the reluctance to depart from the mode of life, and situation of their ancestors, was already shaken by the faint gleam of liberty, which dawned upon them soon after the accession of Frederic II. They now thought matters were ripe for the accomplishment of the objects they had in view, and as soon as the king's decision on the case of Arnold became publicly and universally known, they refused in most parts of the Prussian dominions to do their stipulated services to their lords, and they travelled from the most distant provinces in large bodies to Berlin, in hopes that the king would grant them liberty from every sort of service, and make them as
free

free and independent as their lords. The disorders occasioned by these proceedings were of the most injurious nature. The lords of manors, deprived of the services of their subjects, saw their estates lie waste, the ground remained uncultivated, every employment of agriculture stood still, and the peasants were either obliged to part with their all, to defray the expences of a long and tedious journey, or were reduced to the utmost misery upon the road. In many places the peasants collected together in mobs, mal-treated the stewards and bailiffs of their lords, and it was necessary to call in the assistance of the troops to disperse them.

The king was obliged to exert himself to stop the ill consequences of his obstinacy,* and to punish the ringleaders, either by sending them to hard labour in the fortifications, or by inflicting upon them other severe corporal punishments.

This

* The most enthusiastic admirers of Frederic II. may perhaps find it impossible to clear him, in this instance, of tyranny and injustice, but it must be con-

This in a great measure quelled the disturbances, but not till after immense mischief had been done, and a spirit of rebellion excited and encouraged, which kept the nobles in constant alarm for some years after.

After the death of Frederic II. his successor, the present king, Frederic William the second, annulled all the proceedings of his uncle, restored the degraded judges to their former honours, estates, and employments, and repaid every expence or loss they had suffered. The decree by which this was done, very delicately ascribes the conduct of the late king to his too eager desire to do justice, and to his having been ill advised.

considered, that at this time he laboured under a very tedious and painful disorder. His nights were sleepless, and his days, from the attention he notwithstanding his illness, paid to business, fatiguing in the highest degree. It was therefore no wonder, that his temper became so peevish and irritable, that his most intimate friends and ministers, found it a very disagreeable task to consult with him upon any uncouth or complicated business; and had his illness not been admitted as an apology for his conduct, the opposition of the nobles to his despotic decrees had perhaps been attended with more dreadful consequences.

LET-

L E T T E R S

F R O M

F R E D E R I C H.

L A T E K I N G O F P R U S S I A.

L E T T E R I.

To the **C O U N T E S S D E C A M A S.***

Newstadt, Nov. 11, 1760.

DO you not think me very punctual
in answering your letters? I think you
have reason to be satisfied with me. Is it
not strange how exactly two old people
agree?

* Countess de Camas, was the lady of colonel de
Camas. Her name was formerly Madem. von Brand,
and she had been governess of the household (*Oberhof-
meisterin*) in the family of the mother of the late king.

agree? I have left off suppers these four years, as I found them incompatible with the trade I am obliged to follow, and on marching days my dinner consists of a dish of chocolate.

We have been running like fools, elated with our victories, to try if we could not drive the Austrians from Dresden; but they peeped from the tops of their mountains and laughed at us, and like a silly boy, I went back immediately, and hid myself for vexation, in one of the most cursed villages in all Saxony. I must now endeavour to dislodge the troops of the empire from Freiberg and Chemnitz, in order to get something to eat, and a place to screen us from wind and weather.

She was considerably older than the king, having been born at the latter end of the last century. His regard and friendship for her was of a long standing, and continued unabated during her life. He had habituated himself to call her mama, an appellation which he gave her in all his letters.

The letters are originally written in French. I am very sorry that I have not been able to procure the original in time, and have therefore been obliged to translate them from a German translation.

I assure

I assure you, madam, I lead here as wretched a life, as no one, I believe, except Don Quixote and myself had ever any idea of. My whole way of living, and the constant unremitting fatigues I undergo, have made me so old, that you would hardly know me again. All my hair on the right side of my head is grown grey; my teeth decay and fall out; my face is as full of wrinkles as the furbelow of a petticoat, and my back arched like that of a monk of la Trappe. All this I tell you beforehand, that if we should perchance once more meet in flesh and bone, you may not be too disagreeably struck with my figure. In a word, every thing about me is changed, except the sentiments of my heart, which as long as I breathe, will be full of the sincerest regard and most tender friendship for my dear mama. Adieu! &c. &c.

LETTER II.

To the same.

Nov. 27th.

YOU see, my dear mama, how active and zealous I am in your service. Here is the

the snuff.—We are now engaged in settling our winter quarters; I have still a short journey before me, and then I shall return to Leipzig, and rest myself a little, if such a thing as rest is there to be met with. To me this is an ideal metaphysical word, unconnected with any thing real. Between ourselves, my dear mama, I must tell you, that we lead a very dog's life, but we must not let people see that we think so. Adieu my dearest, do not forget me; for if you did, you would wrong a heart that loves and respects you more than any one else, &c. &c.

LETTER III.

To the same.

Meissen, Dec. 20th.*

I HEREWITH send you a trifle that may now and then remind you of your friend. You may use the box either for rouge or for patches, for snuff or for sweetmeats, or, if you please, for pills. But whatever use you put it to, I wish you may never see the dog, that symbol of fidelity, painted upon

* At Meissen is the famous manufactory of porcelain, commonly known by the name of *Dresden china*.

the

the lid, without remembering the inviolable attachment of one, whose fidelity far exceeds that of the most faithful of these animals, and whose friendship has nothing of the fragile quality of the substance of which the box is made.

I have here ordered china for everybody; for Schönhausen, for my sister-in-law: In short, I am rich in nothing but in this brittle ware, and I hope it will be as acceptable to those I shall send it to as ready money. We are, my dear mama, a pack of poor devils, worth nothing in the world but honour, china, and our swords.

Adieu, my dear good mama. If please God I see you again face to face, I shall then have the pleasure to repeat what I have written, though at any rate, I shall very imperfectly express the affection and respect my heart feels for you.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER IV.

To the same.

Dec. 3d.

WELL, my dearest mama, you have indeed a wonderful stock of experience,
and

and I sincerely congratulate you upon your knowledge in dropfical fymptoms. But the cafe in question is the moft common in the world; there is no court, not even a convent, where thefe things do not frequently occur. For my part, I have too much compaffion for the failings of my fellow creatures, to ftone every court lady, who may happen to have a family. They have at leaft the merit of propagating their fpecies, while your dark furly politicians deftroy it by their cursed wars. But I own, I by far prefer thefe foft pliable tempers, who may now and then be led aftray, to thofe dragons of chaftity, who prey without mercy upon the characters of their own fex, and to thofe peevifh wives, who if the truth was known, are full as bad as the worft.

Care muft now be taken that the child is well brought up, and does not prove a difgrace to the family. The poor girl muft be quietly removed from court, and her reputation blown upon as little as poffible.

We

We shall soon have peace, and then, my dear mama, I will come and laugh heartily with you, at all these and a thousand other follies. Adieu, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

To the same.

Leipzig, Jan. 22d. 1763.

ONE and fifty years, my dear mama, are no trifle. They are sufficient to exhaust the whole stock of Clotho's distaff. I thank you sincerely for the kind interest you take in my being advanced so far. You feel for an old friend and servant, whose affection neither age nor distance have had power to weaken, and who now hopes, with a glad degree of certainty, once more to see, and (if you will give him leave) to embrace you. Indeed, my dear mama, I hope to see you in Berlin, before the bounteous hand of Flora (to speak poetically) has covered the earth with fresh beauty; and if there is in this world a person that I should be happy to see in my capital, it is you. But this is a secret between ourselves, and you must not consider it as spoken poetically, but

as being literally true. May heaven preserve you still many years, and bestow upon you as many blessings, as your virtues deserve, and may I see you in good health and good spirits, full of the same constant and warm friendship that you have hitherto had for me. This, I hope I shall deserve, by the unalterable affection I feel for you, and which will continue the same, till the invidious Parca shall cut the thread of my life.

LETTER VI.

To the same.

Dahlen, March 6, 1763.

I SHALL see you again, my dear mama, at the end of this month, or the beginning of April at the latest, and I hope, in as good spirits as I left you. But you will find me grown considerably older, almost arrived at a second childhood, and as grey as a badger. Hardly a day passes, that I do not lose a tooth, and I am quite lamed by the gout; but you must excuse the weaknesses of old age, and we will talk of former days.

Our

Our good friend, the margrave of Bareuth, is dead. Our friends drop off one by one, and our enemies seem to live for ever. O how I dread Berlin, and the many friends I shall find missing there! But I will think of you, and endeavour to drive the rest from my memory. Be assured that I shall feel the greatest possible pleasure in telling you personally with what sincere respect and friendship, I am, &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

To the same.

June 2d, 1763.

My dearest Mama,

YOUR letter, and kind remembrance of me, have given me real pleasure, and I conclude that your health is better than it has been. I am informed that you are quite out of danger, and that in a short time your recovery will be compleat.

In about an hour's time I expect my sister here, and the idea of meeting her gives me, I own, more pleasure than I have lately felt from any occurrence.

But,

But, my dear mama, you should take the air more than you do. Fresh air is, in your complaint, the most effectual medicine you can use; you will find that it will give you new strength and spirits, and in a short time compleatly restore you. None of your friends can possibly interest themselves more in your recovery than I do; you know my heart, it is still the same, quite formed to love you, and will continue to do so as long as it beats. Adieu my dear mama, take care of your health, and do not forget me.

I shall shew your letter to my sister, it will give her pleasure to find that you have not forgotten her. Indeed I am extremely sorry, that your absence leaves a chasm in our happiness; but yet I am convinced that you do better to spare your strength at present, and in fact as things stand, I could not enjoy much of your company, were you with us. We are here as badly off, as if we were at a diet of the holy Roman empire, lost in a crowd of princes and princesses. My illness prevents my partaking of their feasts and
8 gaiety.

feasting. I can be present only upon occasions of particular ceremony, and in the intermediate time, I endeavour to enjoy a little rest. The old baron laughs heartily at my lame legs, and runs races with prince Frederic. I hobble after them as well as I can, limping on one leg, as clumsily as a tortoise; and see the rapidity of the race, with the feelings of a paralytic at a grand ballet by Dennis.

Good night, my dear mama. I hope to see you again when I shall have recovered the use of my legs, and am able to climb the staircase that leads to the paradise in which you dwell. I the sincerest and oldest of your admirers, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER VIII.

TO the MARQUIS D'ALEMBERT,

(Written soon after the battle of Leigniz.)

My dear Marquis,

FORMERLY such an affair as that of the 15th of August, would have decided the campaign; but now it has no more effect

X

than

than a slight skirmish. A set battle must decide our fate, and according to present appearances, it cannot be long before it must take place; and if fortune is then on our side, we shall have great reason to rejoice. Much art, and many stratagems were necessary to bring things to this crisis. Tell me nothing of danger. The last battle cost me a coat and a horse, and at that rate, I think victory was bought cheap enough.

I have not received the letter you mention. We are, in regard to correspondence, almost entirely blocked up, by the Russians on one side, and by the Austrians on the other. A skirmish was necessary to open the way for Cocceji*, and I hope he will now deliver this letter to you safely.

Never in my life have I been so embarrassed as in the present campaign.—Believe me, nothing but a miracle can extricate me from the difficulties I see before me. If ever the event depends upon my own personal exertions, I shall cer-

* The officer who was entrusted with this letter.

tainly

tainly do my duty ; but, my dear marquis, you must consider that I cannot pretend to any power over fortune, and I find that in all my projects I must leave many things to chance, as it is often above my abilities to lay down any solid and certain plan. I am now engaged in Herculean labours, at the very moment when my resources begin to fail, when my strength seems to be diminishing every day, and (to tell the truth) when even hope, the last comfort of the unfortunate, threatens to leave me. You, my dear marquis, cannot be intimately enough acquainted with the state of our affairs, to comprehend the innumerable dangers, which at this moment hang over the state. I see, but conceal them. My fears I keep to myself, and communicate to the public nothing but my hopes, and the few favourable events that come within my knowledge. If the scheme which I have now in contemplation succeeds, then, my dear marquis, we may have reason to put on a more chearful countenance. But till we are sure of success, we must not cherish

too sanguine hope; or the depression occasioned by disappointment will be double.

I here lead the life of a military monk. My affairs engross many of my thoughts, the rest I devote to the study of the Belles Lettres; and from these I derive as much pleasure and comfort, as did formerly that virtuous consul, who was the father of his country, and of eloquence. I sometimes doubt whether I shall survive the present war; but should I be so fortunate, I am determined to devote the remainder of my days to retirement, and peaceably to enjoy the charms of philosophy and of friendship.

When our correspondence becomes less dangerous and precarious, I shall then be extremely obliged to you, to write to me more frequently. My houses in Breslau have been destroyed by the late bombardment. Our enemies grudge us every enjoyment, even of the common light and air; but do what they will, they must leave us some place to go to, and if we are there but out of the reach of danger,

your company will do more towards making me happy, than any thing that I could possibly wish for.

But, my dear marquis, what has become of the peace with France? Your countrymen are, you see, not quite so wise as you supposed them to be. They, like fools, suffer Canada and Pondicherry to be wrested from them, merely to please the empresses of Russia and Germany, and Heaven grant, that prince Ferdinand may reward their officious zeal, in as rich a measure as they deserve it! But, alas, the poor officers and private soldiers, who are perfectly innocent of all this mischief, will be the only sufferers, and the exalted miscreants, who are the cause of all these calamities, will feel none of the misery occasioned by their crimes.

Here you have a few of my straggling ideas. I was in a humour to write, but I find that unless I close, I shall both tire your patience, and neglect my own affairs.

Adieu, my dear marquis, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER IX.

TO LORD MARSHAL.

(Written after the unfortunate battle of Collin.)

*** THE imperial grenadiers are an excellent corps. One hundred companies defended an eminence with so much bravery, that the flower of my infantry found it impossible to dislodge them. Prince Ferdinand, who commanded my troops, led them seven times to the attack, but was as often obliged to retire. In the first attack he made himself master of one of their batteries, but could not maintain his post. The enemy had the advantage of a numerous and well directed train of artillery, which did credit to general Lichtenstein.

I had not infantry enough. My cavalry was upon the spot, but stood idle during the whole action, excepting one attack, which I made with the Gens d'armes,

d'armes, supported by a few field pieces, but without success. Ferdinand marched against the enemy without firing: they did not spare their fire. They occupied two eminences, were covered on two sides by their works, and had an astonishing train of artillery. Several of my regiments have been cut to pieces. Prince Henry did wonders. I tremble for the fate of my brothers; their courage carries them too far into danger. What I am chiefly deficient in, is infantry.

Success, my good lord, is apt to give us a degree of confidence, which stifles the calls of prudence. An army, consisting of thirty-three battalions, was much too small to drive 60,000 men from an advantageous post. Another time we must manage matters better. Fortune was against us, and indeed I ought to have expected it; fortune is a lady, and you know that I am not very gallant. She therefore declared herself for the ladies*,

* The empresses of Germany and Russia.

with whom we have the honour to be at war.

My dear lord, what do you think of this formidable confederacy against the poor Margrave of Brandenburg? How would the great Frederic William be astonished to see his grandson engaged at once with the Russians, with almost every power in Germany, and with one hundred thousand Frenchmen besides? Whether it will be a disgrace to me to be conquered, I cannot tell; but I am certain that it will be no great honour to conquer me, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER X.

To General de la Motte Fouquet.

Breslau, Dec. 23, 1758.

My dear Friend,

I HEREWITH send you, what in these times of distress you may perhaps stand in need of; it is *the widow's mite*, and
I wish

I wish you to accept it with the same kindness and good-will, with which I present it. I likewise send you a few observations, which I have collected and put to paper, and which are the only advantage I have reaped from my last campaign. According to appearances, we shall not be molested in our winter-quarters; the enemy does not seem inclined to disturb us; prince Ferdinand will, I am afraid, find himself less quietly situated. But let us not draw the veil with which the kind hand of Providence has concealed futurity from our view; we will rather return to what is present and certain, and nothing can be more so, than the sincere regard and friendship which I feel for you, and which as long as I live will continue unabated. God preserve you, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS upon the present Mode of carrying on the War, and upon some Alterations which may be introduced into it*.

OF what use is the life of man, if it is merely the life of a vegetable? For what purpose do we live, if it is only to load our memories with the events that come within our knowledge? In a word, of what use is experience, if not directed and rendered useful by observation? Vegetius says, "that in war we must study, and in peace reduce our observations into system;" and this assertion is founded in truth.

* These observations contain a complete treatise on the mode of carrying on the war against the Austrians. From such a general as the king of Prussia, nothing upon this subject could be expected, but what is full of genius and truth; and professional men are agreed in thinking this treatise the most excellent and complete, that could have been written upon it. But as it contains matters entirely professional, and in a great measure topical, the introduction is here only inserted.

The

The faculty of thinking, or to express myself more properly, the faculty of combining ideas, is what distinguishes a man from a beast. Had a mule served under prince Eugene in ten campaigns, he would have acquired very little knowledge of tactics; and to the disgrace of our own species be it said, that in point of dulness and stupidity, many an old experienced officer may fairly vie with any mule. To go on in the old trammels of the service, to take care that the horses and their own bellies are filled, to eat when every body else eats, and to fight when other people fight; this is what is usually meant by the common phrase, “such an officer has seen much service, and is grown grey in the field of honour.”

Hence the great number of officers who are grown old and rusty in mediocrity, who neither know nor care to know, how it happened that on one occasion they were beaten, or by what means or accident they gained the victory on another.

And

And yet this is a consideration of great importance.

The severe but sensible, and well-founded criticisms of Feuquiere, upon the military system of his day, have marked the path upon which we must proceed to science and practical knowledge. Since the time in which he wrote, war has become a more complicated system: new *arts of murder* have been invented, and the difficulties connected with it have increased. It is therefore necessary to study these difficulties; to examine with care the general system of the enemy; and thereby enable ourselves to find out means to elude, or to render their schemes abortive.

I shall not detain your attention by dwelling upon those schemes of our enemies, that are founded upon the number and the strength of their allies, which would be sufficient not only to crush the king of Prussia, but any other single, unassisted state in Europe. Nor need I make you attentive to the maxims they so evidently have adopted; to divert our ex-
pectations

pectations or fears to some particular side, and then endeavour to execute some capital stroke, in a part where they dread no resistance; to keep on the defensive, where they find an army able to cope with them; and to exert all their powers, where they see us weak or inferior in number.

It would likewise be unnecessary to explain to you the methods, by which I have endeavoured to oppose this mighty Colossus, which threatened to crush me at once. The gross errors of my enemies; their indolence, by which the activity of my exertions was rendered effective; their neglect, in not pursuing the advantages they gained, or which fortune threw in their way; all this ensured success to my plans, and they cannot therefore be quoted as precepts which in every case may be adopted without exception.

Necessity, which knows no law, has often obliged me to trust events of great importance to chance. But the conduct of a seaman, who tossed by the fury of
the

the tempest, and the violence of the waves, quits the useless rudder, and finds his compass of no avail, can never, if he escapes, be considered as a guide for the preservation of others.

In regard to our particular case, every thing depends upon our understanding clearly the system which the Austrians have followed in the present war. I confine my observations to them alone, as they, of all my numerous enemies, have, in comparison with the rest, brought the art of war to the greatest, and most systematic perfection. The French I pass over in silence (notwithstanding they have considerable merit) as their levity and inconsiderate conduct daily deprives them of the considerable advantages, which their scientific knowledge and their ingenuity might gain them. As for the Russians, they are as entirely void of system, as they are of cultivation and humanity; and are therefore not worth taking into consideration * * * *.

Answer

Answer from General de la MOTTE
FOUQUET.

Sire,

IF you recall to your memory the many favours you have already conferred upon me, you will find, that they have far exceeded my most sanguine wishes and deserts. To all these favours, your majesty has added a present of two thousand dollars. With the most humble gratitude I accept of it, and shall endeavour to employ it for the benefit of your majesty's service. To judge of your riches by your generosity, they must be inexhaustible; and at this present time, I particularly congratulate your majesty for them. I am, &c. &c.

De la MOTTE FOUQUET.

LETTER XI.

From the KING to the same.

My dear Friend,

I AM not so rich as you imagine; but by much thought and contrivance I have managed

managed my finances so, that I am in possession of the sum necessary to defray the expences of the ensuing campaign; and between this and the end of February, every expence hitherto incurred will be paid. I have shared the surplus with you, and a few other friends, and now you may compare me with more justice to Irus, than to Cræsus.

I am much indebted to you for your answer to the observations which I sent you. I am exactly of your opinion, but we must take care that our ideas do not get abroad. The Turks begin to put themselves into motion, and I think they will soon do something *decisive*. The king of Spain lies on his death-bed. All this will cut out new work for the base conspirators, who have combined to ruin me. If the gentlemen without hats * direct their motions against the Barbarians †, the whole hord will soon vanish, and Sweden will likewise be taken off. If they attack my

* The Turks.

† The Russians.

impudent

impudent neighbours *, they may find it difficult to defend themselves at the same time against the circumcised, and against me; and if the king of Spain should die, the flames of war will immediately break out in Italy, and our foolish and inconsiderate countrymen will then find great reason to curse the pride and ambition of their tyrants.

This precarious state of affairs, prevents me at present from forming any certain plan of operations. Time alone can discover what will be the event, and what measures my enemies will pursue, in case any of these circumstances should take place; till then, we shall not be able to determine what steps we ought in prudence to take.

Adieu, my dear friend, I wish you health and happiness throughout the new year. Be assured of my affection and friendship, which as long as I live will continue unabated, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

* The Austrians.

Y

LETTER

LETTER XII.

To the same.

Polkheim, the 3d — 1759.

My dear Friend,

I HAVE had an idea, which I will communicate to you, just as I have conceived it in my brain, and perhaps we may find it practicable.

You see what a large body of the enemy's troops at present press upon me, and what an immense army they are collecting upon one spot. It is now too early in the year, and the weather is too unfavourable for them to attempt any thing against me ; and I could therefore wish to make use of the intermediate time, in order to frustrate, by some means or other, their plan of operations. Here, where I am, I can do nothing. I might indeed dislodge them from their advanced posts, and press forward to a certain distance ; but I cannot destroy any of their magazines,

magazines, or effect any thing decisive. I have therefore thought that something perhaps might be done in Upper Silesia. We might perhaps succeed in destroying their magazines in Troppau or Hof. Upon this scheme, I should be obliged to you for your opinion. Your corps consists of fifteen battalions of infantry, and I can spare you six or seven regiments of horse. Let me know what you think of this plan as soon as possible, as you are better acquainted with the strength and position of the Austrians in that quarter than I am. If we succeed, we shall gain at least three or four months time, which is a material object; and besides, we should revenge certain disgraceful occurrences, which still gall my mind. Your answer will determine me as to the measures I shall take; and you may form your resolution, and put it into practice, in a very short time*. Adieu, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LET-

* This scheme in a great measure succeeded, and gave the Prussian army the advantage for the whole campaign.

LETTER XIII.

To the same.

Reichhennersdorf, June 6th, 1759.

I HAVE received your report of the sixth, and approve upon the whole of the measures you have taken. If the enemy seems determined to do his utmost, you must collect all your forces; and with the troops under your command, and those of general Bülow, you are certainly able to attack any one division of the Austrian army, or at least to harraßs them considerably. But unless you keep your forces together, you cannot act with any degree of vigour.

campaign. I have inserted this, and the following letters, from a great number of similar ones to the same general; the characteristic of all which are, an unremitting attention to the plan he had formed; a very considerable knowledge of the schemes and motions of the enemy; a minute attention to every advantageous or unfavourable circumstance; and an uncommon degree of chearful good humour and condescension.

The

The Russians cannot arrive in Silesia before the twelfth, thirteenth, or fourteenth. General Daun means to put himself in motion at the same instant. Hitherto he has remained totally inactive. Not even a patrol has passed the frontier. Yesterday his right wing was posted at Jaromirz, and his left at Schurz. I impatiently await his first movements, from which I shall be able to judge of his plan. I will then let you know, with a greater degree of certainty, in what manner you have to act; but while he sits quiet, I cannot give you any determined orders. You must have patience a little longer; and you may in the mean time spread a report, that I mean to join you with a corps of infantry; that I then mean to pass the Neifs at Camentz, or Patschkow (or any other place you like better) and to attack Delville in his camp in those parts; and when you find this believed, you must spread another rumour, that you mean to post yourself in the neighbourhood of Glatz, and this will disturb their quiet in that quarter. Presently you may

draw their attention to Silberberg, and do as if you intended to march to Neurode; and soon after that, give out that you are marching to Breslau, to oppose the Russians; in short, do every thing in your power to puzzle them, and to keep them staring fifty different ways at once.

But the main stroke must be now soon at hand, and in five or six days their plan must be discovered. But whenever you find that something to the purpose may be done, I beg of you, for God's sake, not to detach any part of your troops, but keep together all your forces; by which I mean, twenty-one battalions of infantry, the free corps of Lüderiz, twenty-five squadrons of cuirassiers and dragoons, and sixteen squadrons of hussars. You know my ideas. It is impossible to tell you every thing before hand; but as soon as the enemy makes the least motion, by which I may guess his design, I shall be able to give you more determined orders. If the main body of the army is posted against me, you may certainly cope with any detachment they can send against you,
if

if you have but bread sufficient for ten days; and in case of necessity, the horse may forage. But should the enemy only make a feint, and draw the bulk of his army towards Friedland, I shall immediately follow him, not to dispute the pass with him, but to cut him off from Bohemia; by which measure he will be obliged, either to attack me with great disadvantage to himself, or to seek the open country and join Delville, in order to procure provisions. In the first case you may, by taking a proper circuit, fall upon his flank or rear, whilst I am engaged with him in the front; in the other, you must harraß him as much as possible in his march, and we shall be able to attack his rear-guard, as soon as he leaves the mountains. You might likewise spoil the roads between Silberberg and Neurode, by filling them with trees and bushes, to prevent them from intruding themselves upon us in that quarter, as they would find it impossible to

get their artillery along, without which, you know, they never stir * * * *.

FREDERICK.

LETTER XIV.

To the same.

My dear Friend,

I AM much at a loss to tell you, what we have to expect at present. As long as the enemy remains in his present state of inactivity, it is impossible to guess his designs. So much I think I can plainly see, that the chief plan he wishes to accomplish, is to make himself master of Glatz. I can guess at the measures he means to take in order to effect this purpose; but these may be so different, that I am perhaps widely mistaken. It will be difficult to get out of this state of suspense, till his mighty excellence * condescends

* General Daun, to whom the king of Prussia gave a number of whimsical names. He had received

descends to throw some light upon the subject. I wait with much impatience to see of what this consecrated creature, who seems pregnant with something important, will be delivered. We are in this quarter all attention: we stand and prick up our ears, like so many greyhounds, ready to seize the game as soon as it starts.

I have a great number of unsatisfactory reports, and a whole list of alehouse news, concerning the enemy's army, with which I will not trouble you; but as soon as I hear any thing like truth, you may rely upon my acquainting you with it.

Fermor* is coming forward with all the solemnity of some learned head of a college, with a troop of pedants at his heels; who knows, but every thing depends upon his motions? But necessity

received the blessing of the pope, accompanied by a consecrated hat and sword, as a testimony of the satisfaction of his holiness with his exploits against the heretics; to which circumstance the king frequently alludes in the names he gives him.

* An Austrian general.

will

will soon oblige us to find some means of extricating ourselves from these difficulties; and as I know that you are exactly of my opinion in regard to the situation of our affairs, I can give you no new orders or advice. I am, &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER XV.

To the MARQUIS D'ALEMBERT.

(Written after a heavy fit of illness in which his life was despaired of.)

THIS time, my dear d'Alembert, I have been luckier than I expected; and if you have still a regard for me, you will be glad of my narrow escape from death. The gout made fourteen violent attacks upon my life; and much fortitude, and a good constitution was necessary, to bear up against so much pain: but now I am once more alive, I hope to devote the short remainder of my days, to my country, to my friends, and perhaps a small portion

portion of them to the muses: for I must confess, that the immense quantities of trash you have lately sent me from France, have entirely spoiled my taste for reading. I am an old man, and it does not suit my years, to trifle away my time with these French coxcombs. I love solid learning; and could I recall the days that are past, and be young again, I should certainly apostate from French literature, and side with the English and German authors.

My dear d'Alembert, I have lived to see many strange events; I have lived to see the soldiers of the pope wear my uniform; the jesuits choose me for their general; and Voltaire write like an old woman.

News, I have none to tell you. A philosopher like you cares little for politics, and the members of my academy are grown too old, to produce much that is new.

I have once more taken the field against the law-suits; and could I, before I leave this world, destroy that cruel, many-headed

headed monster, I confess I should feel more pride and satisfaction than ever Perseus can have felt.

You, my dear d'Alembert, have an excellent king, to which I heartily congratulate you. A king that is wise and virtuous, is more feared than one that is brave.

Next spring I hope to see you with me, and am, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER XVI.

TO STANISLAUS, KING OF POLAND*.

*** YOUR majesty must consider, that as your crown has been conferred upon you, not by inheritance, but by the choice of your subjects, the world

* This letter was written in the year 1764, upon the accession of Stanislaus to the crown of Poland. It was penned by the king's own hand, and probably differed very materially from any other letters Stanislaus received upon the occasion.

will

will be more scrupulously attentive to your actions, than to those of any other prince in Europe; and this is no more than just. As in the first case, power proceeds merely from an accidental family connection, no more is expected (though much more were to be wished) from such a prince, than what might fall to the lot of any other common man. But from a prince, who by the voice of his equals has been advanced from the rank of a subject to that of a monarch, who has been freely chosen to govern those who conferred the government upon him, from such a prince every thing is expected that can add lustre and dignity to a crown.

Gratitude to his people is the first virtue of such a king; for, next to Providence, he owes to them his dignity. An hereditary monarch, whose acts disgrace his station, is merely a libel upon himself; but a monarch, elected by the suffrages of his subjects, sullies, by every unworthy action, the character of his people, equally with his own.

Your

Your majesty will forgive my warmth, as it is the effect of the sincerest regard. The amiable part of the picture is more prophetic of what you will be throughout your reign, than instructive of what you ought to be. I am, &c. &c.

FREDERIC.

LETTER XVII.

To the same.

My dear Brother,

I THANK you sincerely for the offer * you have made, and would accept it with the greatest pleasure, as I am sure that every thing that is undertaken under the auspices of your majesty, must be crowned with success: but not every one has the same inclination for peace, that I have. The courts of Vienna and Petersburgh have, in a very strange and peremptory

* Stanislaus had offered his residence, (Nancy,) for negotiating a general peace between the belligerent powers.

manner,

manner, rejected the proposals made by the king of England, and they will probably succeed in persuading France to continue the war, which they flatter themselves cannot but be successful. They alone therefore have to answer for all the innocent blood which may still be shed. If every prince were as attentive as your majesty to the voice of humanity and justice, the world would soon cease to be a scene of destruction, fire, and murder.

I am, with sentiments of the greatest respect, and sincerest friendship,

Your majesty's loving brother,

FREDERIC.

LETTER XVIII.

To the late EMPRESS of GERMANY,
MARIA THERESA.

(Written after the bloody Battle and Victory at
Leuthen.)

**** YOUR** majesty at first gained some advantages in Silesia, but they were of no long

long duration. I shudder when I recollect the horror of the last battle, and the streams of innocent blood shed there. I have made good use of my victory, have taken Breslau, and hope soon to be again master of Schweidniz; and I shall then be able to carry my arms into the heart of Bohemia and Moravia. I wish you may consider this, and that it may open your eyes in regard to those upon whom you place your confidence. You will then be convinced, that by the measures you have taken, your country must be ruined, the guilt of having spilt so much innocent blood will fall upon you, and you will find that you are not able to vanquish one, whose friendship, had you accepted it, (as he is already your near relation) might have enabled you to give the law to Europe. I write this from the sincerest motives, and hope it will make an impression upon you; but if you rather choose to push matters to an extremity, I shall certainly not neglect to exert the utmost of my power. If your allies give you that assistance which they in duty
ought,

ought, my ruin is inevitable; but it will be some satisfaction to me, to think that I endeavoured to preserve an elector from destruction; that I have refused to add to the power of the house of Bourbon; and that I have at once successfully defended myself against two empresses and three kings. * * *

FREDERIC:

LETTER XIX.

To some of the CONFEDERATE NOBLEMEN of POLAND.*

I CANNOT comprehend in what the imminent danger consists, by which the Roman catholic religion is said to be

* This letter is an answer to an apology sent by some of the Confederates, for the great excesses they had committed on the Prussian frontiers, in which they endeavoured to excuse themselves by laying the blame upon their *religious zeal*, a quality which has always been, but was then particularly pernicious to those who happened to fall in its way.

Z

threat-

threatened in Poland, and which has produced such heavy complaints on part of the Roman catholics of that kingdom. In what can this danger originate? Is it not the established religion of the country even by *that* law,* which seems to be the ground of the complaint? Are there not in that very law, many points that are by far more favourable to the Roman catholics than to the dissidents?† Are not the latter at liberty to become Roman catholics whenever they please, and are not the Roman catholics prohibited, on pain of forfeiting all their privileges, from forsaking their church? It is evident that the king of Poland, far from having infringed upon the laws of the country, has done every thing in his power, to keep them in force. He has restored to many of his subjects, the rights wrested from

* The resolutions of the Polish Diets, and the laws enacted by them, are called *Constitutions*, which is the word used in the original.

† *Dissident*, is the common name in Poland for every person who is not a Roman Catholic.

them

them by violence and oppression. The empress of Russia, actuated by the same motives of justice and humanity, and as guarantee of the established laws and constitution of Poland, has herein given her assistance. Neither the empress nor the king have had the least idea of depriving the Roman catholic religion of any of her privileges, but what they have done, has evidently proceeded from true patriotism.

Not only these princes, but every enlightened country in Europe, must abhor the excesses which have been lately committed by the blind zeal of some of the Poles, who have laid waste their country with fire and sword.

Nothing can be more contrary to the whole tenor of Christianity than the shedding of innocent blood. Christianity abhors violence, and is only animated by the spirit of toleration. The first Christians were the most peaceable people that had ever appeared in the world. They pitied the heretics and endeavoured to convert, but never persecuted them; and

Christians, though of the Roman church, should not grudge their fellow Christians, of any other denomination, the free exercise of that religion, the essential articles of which are common to both.

But what grievances have the Polish Roman catholics to complain of? Are they afraid, that the few privileges granted to the dissidents by the late laws, will ever enable them to lift up their heads, and that the members of the established church, who have secured to themselves the execution of the laws, and the possession of all power in the country, will ever be persecuted by the dissidents, in any degree equal to what that unfortunate people now suffer? Have any of their churches been shut up? Have their images been destroyed? Hath any Pole been forced to change his religion? No violence of this kind has at least reached my ears, and their complaints seem unauthorised by any single fact.

I would therefore advise you, as your religion is secured from any encroachment,

to

to turn your thoughts to what is your duty as fellow-citizens, and countrymen of those Poles, who are born to the same rights and liberty with yourselves, and not to think them unworthy of enjoying those posts of honour and profit, to which their right seems as well grounded, and as ancient as your own. And after all, what have the abilities, necessary to fill an important post with honour and credit, to do with the encouragement or destruction of the Roman catholic religion?

England and Holland are not Roman catholic countries; and yet the members of that, of the Greek church, and of a hundred other sects, have full liberty there to follow their own opinions, and to serve God in their own way.

You cannot be surpris'd that I, who profess the most extensive toleration, should think the arguments in favour of persecution very fallacious. I much wish to see your country blest with peace and harmony; but above all things I wish that you may discern between those friends
who,

who, by giving you such advice, aim at your true welfare; and those who deceive you, and by blowing up the fire of discord and rebellion, endeavour to involve you in the deepest calamities.

FREDERIC.

Berlin,

Nov. 10, 1769.

F I N I S.



REMARKS AND ERRATA.

PAGE

19. Line 4. read Frederic II. instead of Frederic III.
25. The Note. The division of the electorate of Brandenburg into three provinces, is not correct. The two principal divisions of Brandenburg are, Churmark and Newmark. Churmark is subdivided into Mittelmark, Ukkermark, Altmark and Priegnitz.
72. Line 12. read reckoned, instead of reckoning.
89. Last line, read of hunger, instead of, for hunger.
109. Last line but one, read chaplains, instead of chaplain.
133. The Note. The reason why the post gives way to a dung cart, or rather waggon, is partly a respect paid to so useful a machine in agriculture, and partly lies in the difficulty of turning them when laden. They are very narrow, and the manure is commonly piled up in them to such a height, that to turn them short in a deep German road, would be infallibly to overturn them.
193. The Note. It was found impossible to insert the article alluded to, in the 53d Number of the Annals of Agriculture, published in June, but it will appear in Number 54, now in the press. Vide Answers to Questions concerning Silesian Economy, by Baron von Heit-hausen, Lord of Crausche, &c. &c.
219. Line 11, read Lusatia instead of Lustatia.
305. Line 15, read I am the sincerest, instead of I the sincerest,

REMARKS AND DATA

The above information was obtained from a review of the records of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Archives and Records Administration.



